

CHANDAMAMA

NOVEMBER 1974

ONE RUPEE

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for the story



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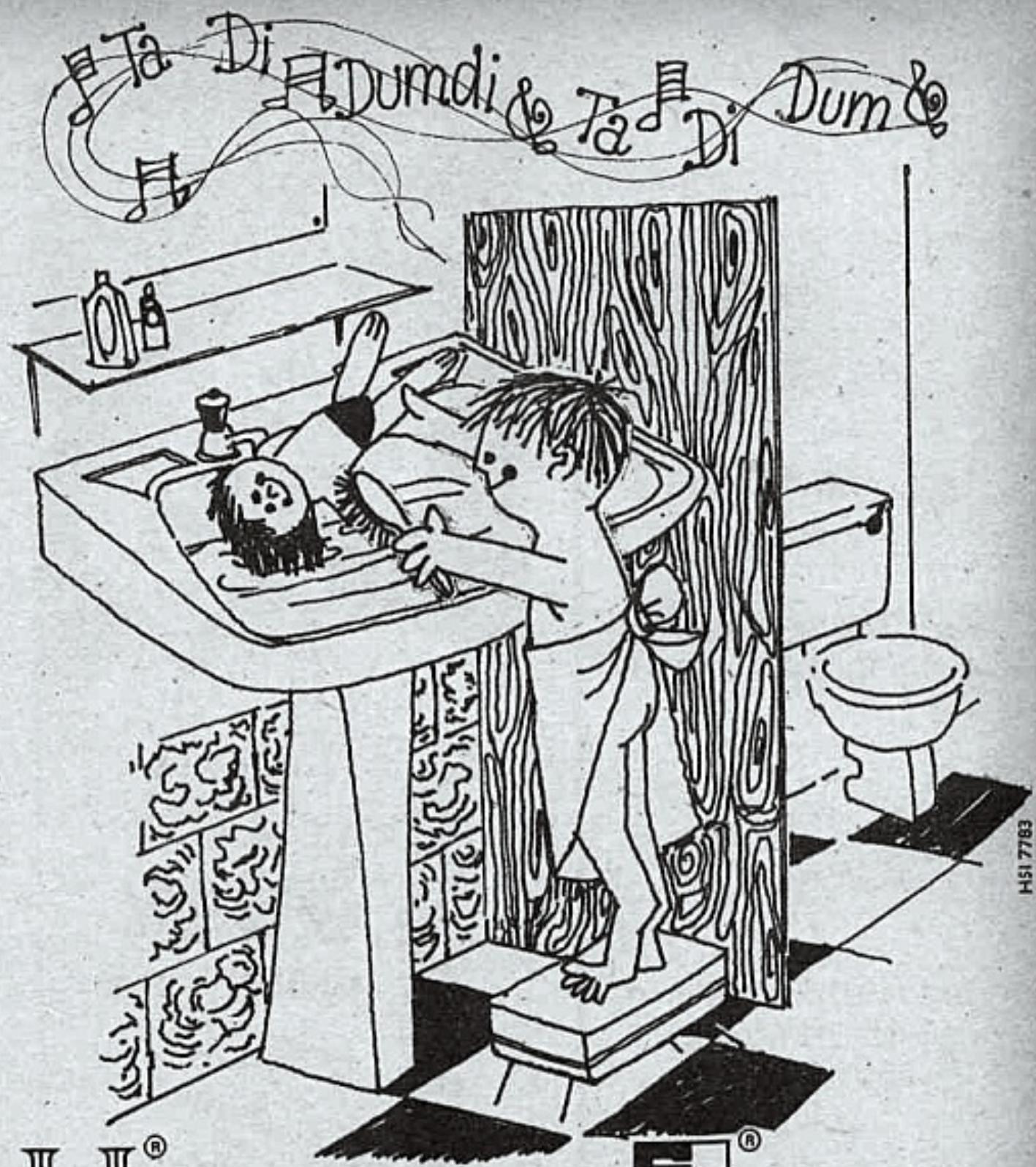


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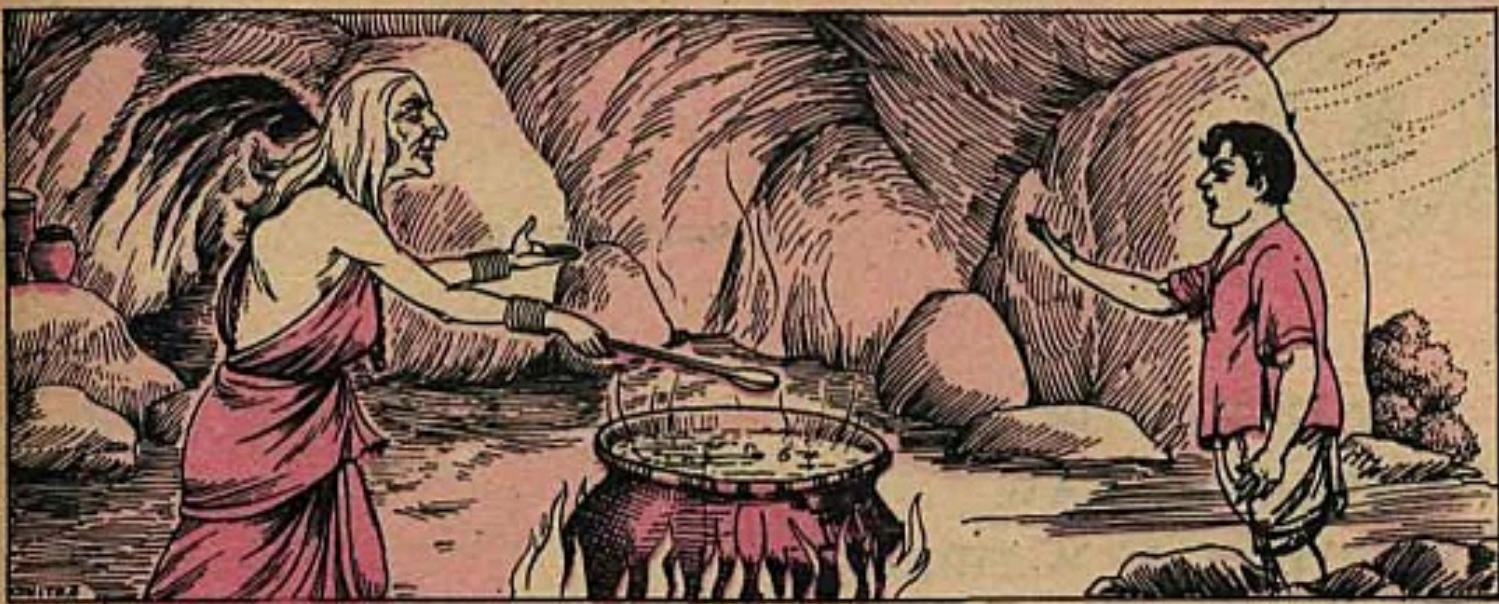
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*May every joy and prosperity be yours
on this Festival of Lights*





THE CURE FOR IDIOCY

In a certain village lived a young man whose real name nobody remembered. He was called by everybody as Idiot!

Let us also call him by that name although we know that people often mistake innocence as idiocy. He was, indeed, a good-hearted young man.

"Hello Idiot! Have you never heard about the old woman of the mountain? Why don't you meet her and ask her for some cure for your idiocy?" The villagers used to advise him from time to time. Idiot had heard a lot about the old woman of the mountain. She cured people of their diseases by her magic herbs and also gave solutions

Idiot decided to go and seek her advice one day.

The old woman was busy boiling some mysterious things when Idiot approached her. He said politely, "Granny! People say that I am an idiot. Can you cure me of my idiocy?

"I can. But you have to fulfill a condition first. You must bring to me the thing you value most. Only then I can cure you!" said the old woman.

"That I can bring at once. We have a dog which is very dear to me. I love kites too. I can bring any of them!" said the young man. He was in high spirit as he thought that he was going to become a



"That would not do, my boy! I repeat, you must bring to me the thing you value most! And you cannot deceive me. For, when you would bring the thing to me, I will ask you a question. I will know that you have brought the right thing only if you can answer my question right."

"Oh, all right. Let me go home and think about it. I will meet you tomorrow," said the pensive young man as he left for home.

He told everything to his mother. The mother sighed

easy to get cured of one's idiocy."

"Why not, mother? Now I know what I should carry to the old woman. I will carry a fowl. Don't I like fowls most? I mean the chicken curry?"

"Do as you like," said his mother.

Idiot proceeded to the mountain forthwith and produced a fowl before the old woman. "This is the thing I value most!" he declared.

"We will see. Now tell me, what is the thing that runs without legs?" asked the old woman.

Idiot thought for a long time, but could not answer.

"My boy! You have not brought the thing you value most. You may go away now. Come when you have found the right thing," said the old woman.

Idiot returned home, very sad. A few days passed. One day he told his mother, "What I value most has just occurred to me. Mother! I value you most. Now, let me take you to the old woman."

The mother was anxious to see the son cured of his idiocy. So, she willingly accompanied

woman looked at them. The young man said, "Granny! This is my mother whom I value most."

"Is that so?" said the old woman, "Then let us hear you answer this question: "What is that which glows like gold; you wear it, but you cannot hold it?"

Idiot stood scratching his head for a long time. But he could not answer.

"Go away, boy, and come again when you have found the right thing," said the old woman as she turned back.

Idiot and his mother returned home. Days passed. He gave up all hope of curing his idiocy.

However, while on his way

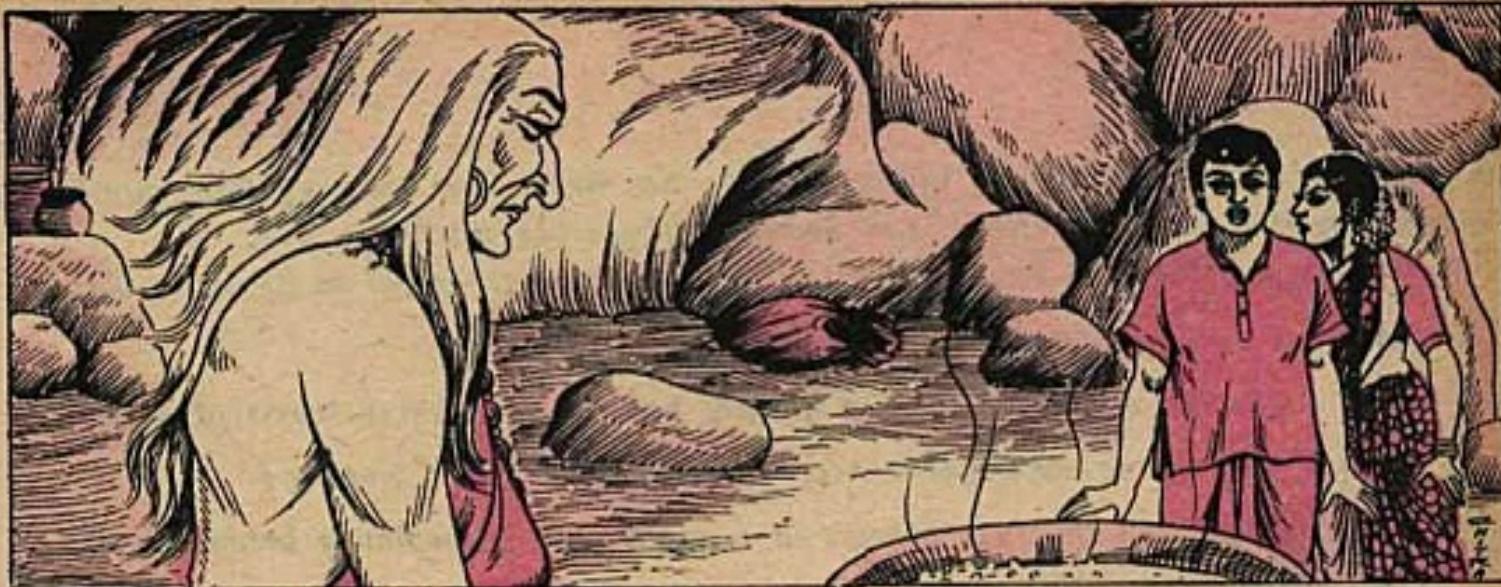
to and fro the mountain, Idiot used to rest near the cottage of a woodcutter who was a very old man. He had nobody in the world except a grand-daughter. After some time the old man died. Idiot, finding his grand-daughter helpless, married her.

She was an intelligent girl and she helped her husband in all his works. They were a happy couple.

One day the young man said to his wife, "Let us go to the mountain. I have no doubt that now I can truly satisfy the old woman."

When they met the old woman on the mountain, Idiot





told her, "Look here, Granny, I have brought at last what I value most."

The old woman looked at them askance and said, "In that case you should be able to say what is the thing that runs without legs!"

Idiot's wife whispered in his ear and he answered, "It is water that runs without legs!"

"Hm!" said the old woman, "Now the next question: What is the thing that glows like gold, you wear it, but cannot hold it?"

Which plant has the biggest leaf?

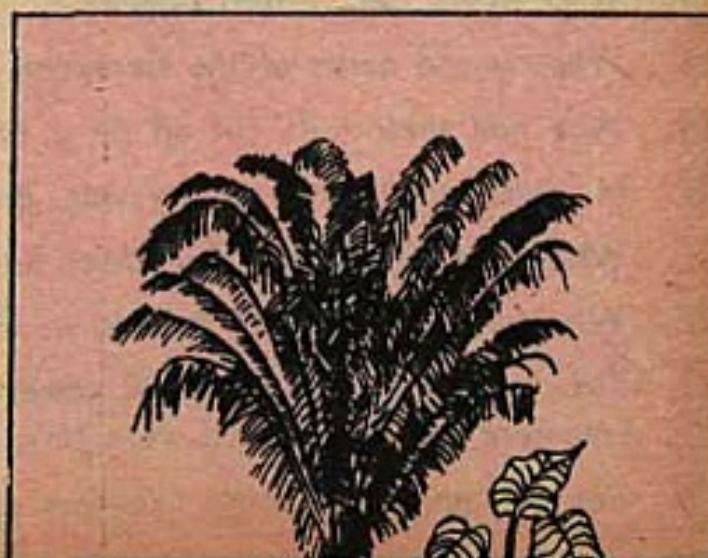
The biggest seems to be those of the raffia palm which grows on some islands in the Indian Ocean, and the bamboo palm of the Amazon area. Some of the leaves of these palms have been up to 65 ft. long. Perhaps the biggest leaf ever known was found on a plant in Malaysia; it was ten feet long and more than six ft. wide.

Again the young lady whispered to her husband and he said, "It is the sun. We wear sunshine, but we cannot hold it!"

"Very good," said the old woman, "You are already in possession of the cure for idiocy!" said the old woman.

"How?" the young man asked, puzzled.

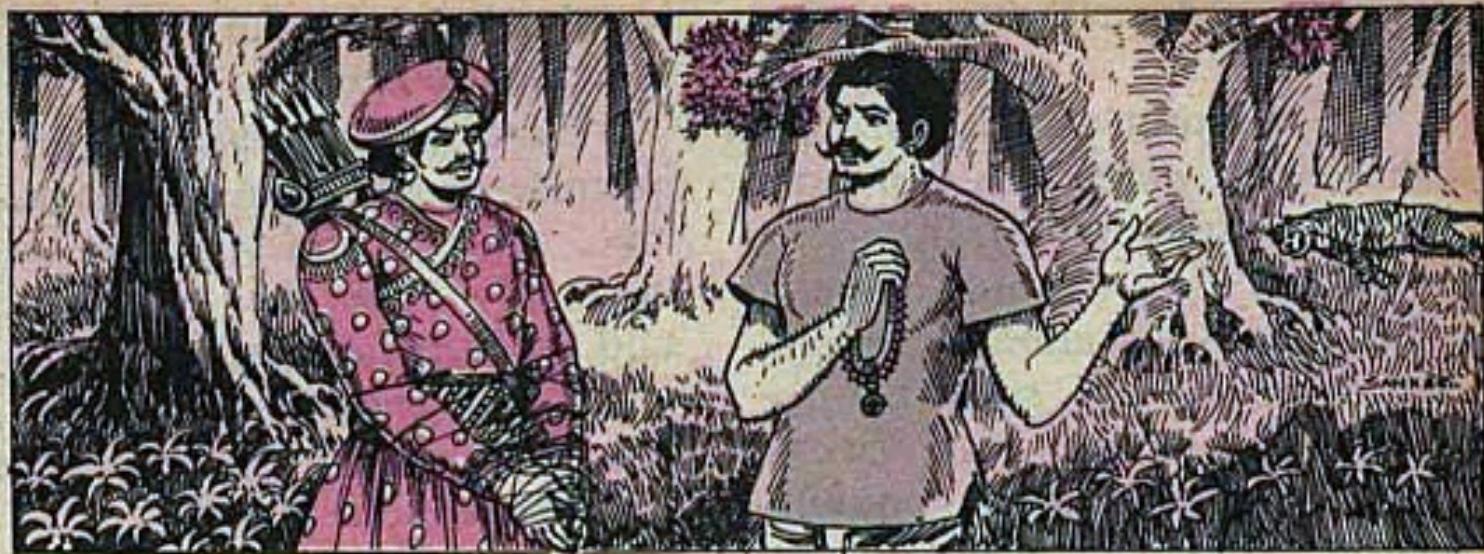
"The idiot's cure is his wife," said the old woman, "And you have got the cure!"



WHAT'S YOUR SCORE?

Everyone is interested in numerology. So here are twentyfour questions based on the numbers three and seven. (Answers on Page 59).

1. Which was the first country to adopt an unadorned tri-colour as its national flag ?
2. What is a person in his seventies called ?
3. What was the name given to an ancient worship with three banks of oars ?
4. Which was the seventh month according to the Roman Calendar ?
5. What do we call the four players in a rugby side immediately behind the half backs ?
6. Which stretches of water are known as the seven seas ?
7. What were the names of the three Gorgons of Greek Mythology ?
8. Which are the seven deadly sins ?
9. In which game can we have a player as 'third man' ?
10. What is the chemical term to denote an atom which is equivalent to seven atoms of hydrogen ?
11. What are the 'three R's' ?
12. What do we call a musical composition for seven instruments ?
13. What is a trident ?
14. In Geometry, what is the name of a seven-sided figure ?
15. What special name is given to a third wedding anniversary ?
16. Which team game, similar to basket-ball, is played on a pitch and has seven players in a side ?
17. Who wears the 'Triple Crown' ?
18. What is the name of the European city, built on seven hills ?
19. Who had their tails cut off by a farmer's wife ?
20. In which nineteenth century war, did the Seven Days battle occur ?
21. What type of business has three balls as its sign ?
22. Who ruled Austria and Prussia in the seven years war ?
23. The Battle of Austerlitz is sometimes known as 'the Battle of "the three Emperors" because there were three present'. Who were they ?
24. Can you name the Seven Wonders of the ancient world ?



A STRANGE LAW

One afternoon a king was wandering in a forest, for the purpose of hunting. His bodyguards were following him at some distance.

Suddenly the king saw a terrible scene: A young man had been attacked by a tiger. He was desperately trying to free himself from the ferocious animal. But there was little chance of his succeeding.

The king at once took a careful aim at the tiger and shot a deadly arrow. The tiger fell dead.

"Who are you?" the king asked the young man.

"I will presently tell you," said the young man, "But will you please show me both your hands for a moment?"

The king put forward his hands innocently. At once the

young man bound them with a strong rope and said, "You see, I am a thief!"

The king was taken aback. He recovered his wit and said, "But for my intervention, you would have been devoured by the tiger, isn't that so?"

"I did not request you to come to my rescue, did I? Now that I have survived the danger, I must follow my profession," said the thief and then he stripped the king of all his jewellery and fled.

Soon the king's bodyguards reached there and freed the king.

But back in the palace, the king made a strange declaration: "From today, helping others would be considered a crime in my kingdom. Those who help others would be

severely punished! This is the law."

The announcement left the officials as well as the common people puzzled and afraid.

But the king was not content with merely the announcement. He dismissed all such people from his service who were known for their spirit of public service. People who were notorious for selfishness and intrigue were appointed as officers. Those who were found out by his detectives as doing good to others were arrested and jailed.

The prime minister of the king knew why the king had become such a cynic. He was determined to change the king's attitude. Accordingly, disguised as a common man, he carried a bag with some money and entered the forest. As he had expected, soon the thief appeared before him and snatched away his bag.

"Look here, young man, I am leaving this land because I am disgusted with the king. Please do not harass me," said the minister.

"Were you an officer of the king?" asked the thief.

"Yes, in his treasury. If you return my bag, I will help you

to plunder the royal treasury," said the minister.

"Here is your bag. And I promise to give you your legitimate share if you can help me to steal from the treasury," said the hopeful thief.

"I will certainly help you. The king is my enemy," the minister assured him.

But as soon as they reached near the palace, the minister gave some signal and immediately the thief was captured by the king's guards who were hiding nearby.

In the morning the king saw the thief and recognised him.

"Hang him," he ordered.

On hearing the king's order the minister began to weep.

"What is the matter, old man?" enquired the king, surprised.

"My lord! By passing the order to kill this thief, you are doing a great service to the people. Naturally, you will break your own law and perhaps will deserve to be punished!" explained the minister.

The king realised his folly. He rescinded the law and released all the good men who had been imprisoned.

The thief, of course, was duly punished.



MYSTERY OF A DREAM

"Nothing, unless a dream is a happening. Nevertheless, something bad, I'm afraid, is going to happen to me," said the king as he sighed.

"My lord! I am rather puzzled!" confessed the minister.

"I am no less," said the king and narrated his dream: "I suddenly find myself inside a jungle. It was getting dark. I could not remember why and how I came there and where were my bodyguards. I climbed a tree in order to see if there was anybody nearby. Next moment a number of ferocious, laughing hyenas collected under the tree and began to circle it ravenously, looking at me with hungry eyes and making menacing attempts to climb the tree.

"I was scared stiff. Any moment I could fall down. Just then I saw three merry young men galloping in my direction from nearby highland. All of them saw my plight. But one just yawned and trotted away. The second one laughed

Once upon a time there was a good king who always enjoyed sound sleep and never remembered any dream if he had ever had any. But one night he gave out a terrific shriek and woke up. He was still shivering with fear when his prime minister, urgently summoned, appeared before him long before it was dawn.

"What is the matter, my lord?" asked the anxious minister.

"No matter, unless you call a dream a matter," replied the king.

"What has happened, Your Very Exalted Highness?" the intrigued minister was as polite as possible.

and gave a lusty cheer to the hyenas. Only the third one rushed to my rescue. But I was not sure if I would be able to hold on to the tree till he reached the spot. The impatient hyenas were violently clawing at and scratching the tree. I shouted at the young man, asking him to hurry up. Well, that woke me up!"

"It is a very unusual dream, my lord," said the minister,

"And that is why I don't want our usual soothsayers to explain away its meaning. I don't trust them. Nevertheless I want an explanation. There must be some wise man somewhere in my kingdom who should be able to tell us its meaning. But I am afraid—although a king should not be afraid on so many scores—that if I send my courtiers to consult the wise ones, they will never report the truth to me. If the wise ones tell that the dream signified my death, the courtiers, out of their strange kindness for me, would report that it meant I will soon marry again. What am I to do? Whom to entrust with the task of finding out the right explanation?" The king said as he got down from his bed and sat up about anxiously.

The minister, keeping pace with the restless king, spoke gravely, "My lord! I have a feeling that the three young men you saw in the dream have something to do with your three sons."

The king came to a halt and nodded like a chameleon and said, "I'm afraid, you are speaking a lot of sense, minister!"

"Thank you, my lord," the minister bowed and continued, "I suggest, the three princes be asked to find out the meaning of your dream."

"That is an excellent idea. And the one who would explain away the dream to my satisfaction, would succeed me to the throne," declared the king.

The three princes were immediately summoned there. The king narrated his dream to them and ordered, "Now, boys, I give you twentyfour hours time. Go wherever you like and consult whomsoever you like. But tell me tomorrow morning what the dream means."

The eldest prince who had been roused from his sleep quite early, hurried back to his bed and ordered his servants to cover him with an extra thick blanket. He did not get up

before mid-day by which time he had had enough of his own dreams to forget all about the king's dream.

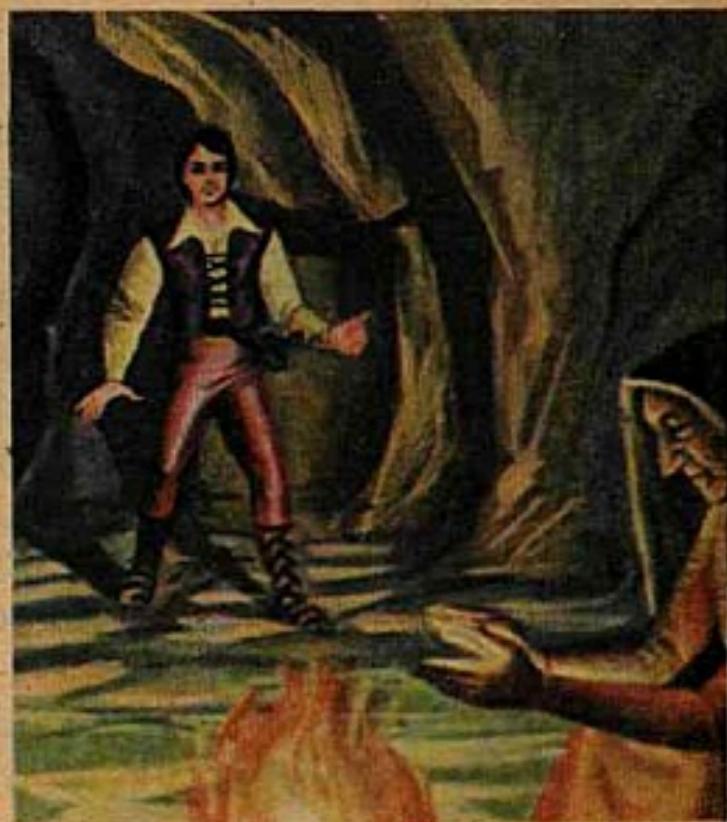
But the other two princes galloped forthwith in opposite directions.

The youngest prince met several soothsayers, scholars, pundits and priests and gathered many possible interpretations of the dream. However, he was not quite satisfied with them.

At the far end of the kingdom was a hill. Many people had told the prince that on the top of the hill, in a cave, lived a mysterious old woman. She had the power to read the future and as such she could perhaps read the true meaning of the dream.

By evening the youngest prince and his horse were exhausted. The prince left the horse at the foot of the hill and climbed the hill with great difficulty. Soon he found out the old, haggardly woman, sitting in front of her cave and warming up her shrunken fingers in a small fire.

The prince greeted her and said, "O wise old woman of the mountain, pray, would you kindly explain the meaning of a



dream my father the king dreamt last night?"

He then began to narrate the dream. But the woman interrupted and said, "I know all about it. I can tell you what it means. But will you in return marry my daughter?"

The prince had not expected to face such a condition. He hesitated and said, "Er, should I not have a look at your daughter before making such a promise?"

The old woman immediately called out for her 'daughter. From inside the cave appeared a girl as ugly as a scarecrow and greeted the prince in a voice which sounded like a cracker petering out.

The prince sighed and said, "Well, to speak the truth, your daughter does not very much resemble the picture I had in my mind for a bride. But I promise to marry her if my father will feel satisfied with the meaning you will read into his dream. It is most necessary that I chance upon the right meaning, for my father thinks that the dream carries some hint about his death!"

"Your father is right," said the woman, "He is likely to die tonight."

"Tonight?" cried out the prince.

"Yes, but I did not say that he shall die tonight; someone would try to kill him tonight."

"O wise woman! Allow me to hurry back and stand guard on my father," said the prince.

"That is like a dutiful son," the woman encouraged him, "But do not say a word to anybody. Hide yourself in the king's bedchamber and expect the assassin. For the full meaning of the dream, meet me tomorrow."

The prince went as fast as his tired horse could take him. In time he reached the palace and hid himself inside the king's bedchamber, behind a screen.

The king retired to bed as usual. Musicians played a lullaby tune for some time. They stopped and left when they knew that the king was asleep.

Slowly the whole palace became as quiet as a hill-top. Then, to his horror, the hiding prince saw in the dim light a man emerging from under the king's cot, dagger in hand. The stranger was about to stab the king when the prince sprang out and brandishing his sword challenged the man.

The king woke up. His servants rushed in and captured the stranger. The news spread as fast as sound and the king's kinsmen, his ministers and the commander of his army and even the eldest prince, all gathered there. But nobody could recognise the stranger. And the fellow never spoke.

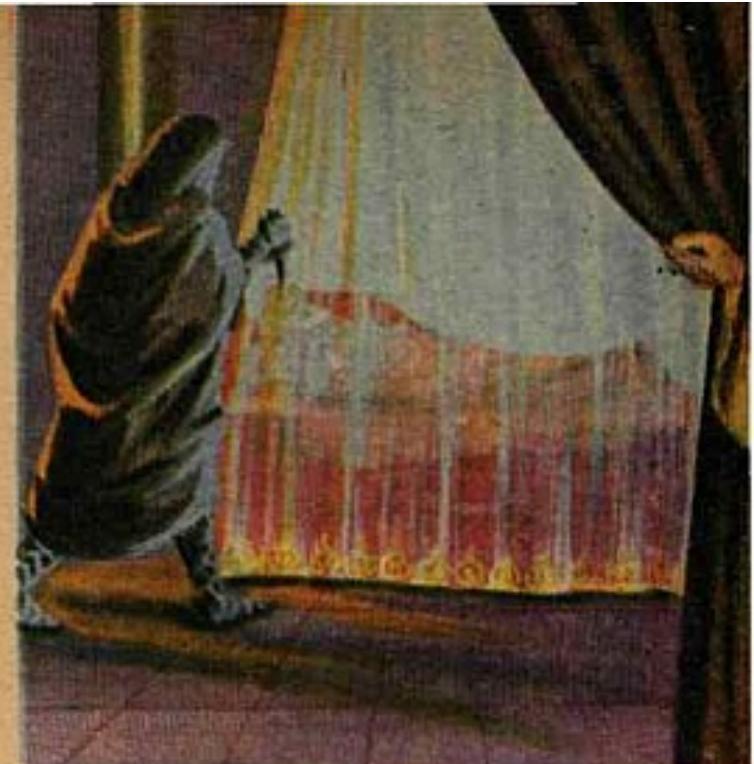
The prince narrated all that had happened and then said, "Father! We are yet to know the significance of your full dream. I must hurry back to the old woman and know the rest from her."

"I should accompany you to show my gratitude to the old woman but for whom I would have been empty of all blood by

now! And let us drag this prisoner along with us. The old woman may be able to say who he is."

It was dawn when the royal party reached the mountain top. They greeted the old woman and the king gave her many thanks and requested her to explain the full dream to him.

"It is clear, O king, as clear as the sky. Your bodyguards deserting you inside the forest means there is laziness in the atmosphere. People neglect their duty. The hyenas who were about to kill you represent the forces of violence. They were trying to destroy you. The atmosphere, at the moment, is full of either laziness or violence. The tree which you climbed represents your trust in your own goodness, which sustains you. The three youngmen who were coming in your direction were your three sons. The first son was too lazy to be of any help to you. Neither the second son had any individuality. Both were playthings of the forces in the atmosphere. In fact, before your youngest son met me last evening, your second son had met me. I had told him that the night ahead was dangerous for you, but if



you survive the night, you will live long. He was not happy to learn that there was a possibility of your living long. An ordinary creature susceptible to the forces in the atmosphere, he was cruel enough to decide to kill you so that he could occupy the throne. He donned a disguise and hid under your cot."

"What! My son?" the king shrieked as he pulled the false beard off the prisoner's chin. He was, indeed, no other than the second prince!

The old woman continued, "The young man who came to your rescue in the dream was the youngest prince who has already proved how true your dream was. He alone could keep his heart and head above the atmosphere. He was never influenced by the forces that reigned around him."

"I feel so satisfied to get my dream so well explained!" exclaimed the king.

"You are satisfied, are you, father? In that case please allow me to marry this kind lady's daughter. I had promised to do that if her explanation of the dream satisfied you!"

"Certainly, my son, marry her daughter by all means! But should I not see and bless my would-be daughter-in-law?"

"Don't father, please don't!" cried the prince hiding his face in his palms.

Just then, at the old woman's beckoning, there appeared her daughter, as beautiful as the dawn, her voice as sweet as the nightingale's.

"How lucky you are!" the king shook the prince. The sad prince opened his eyes and looked bewildered.

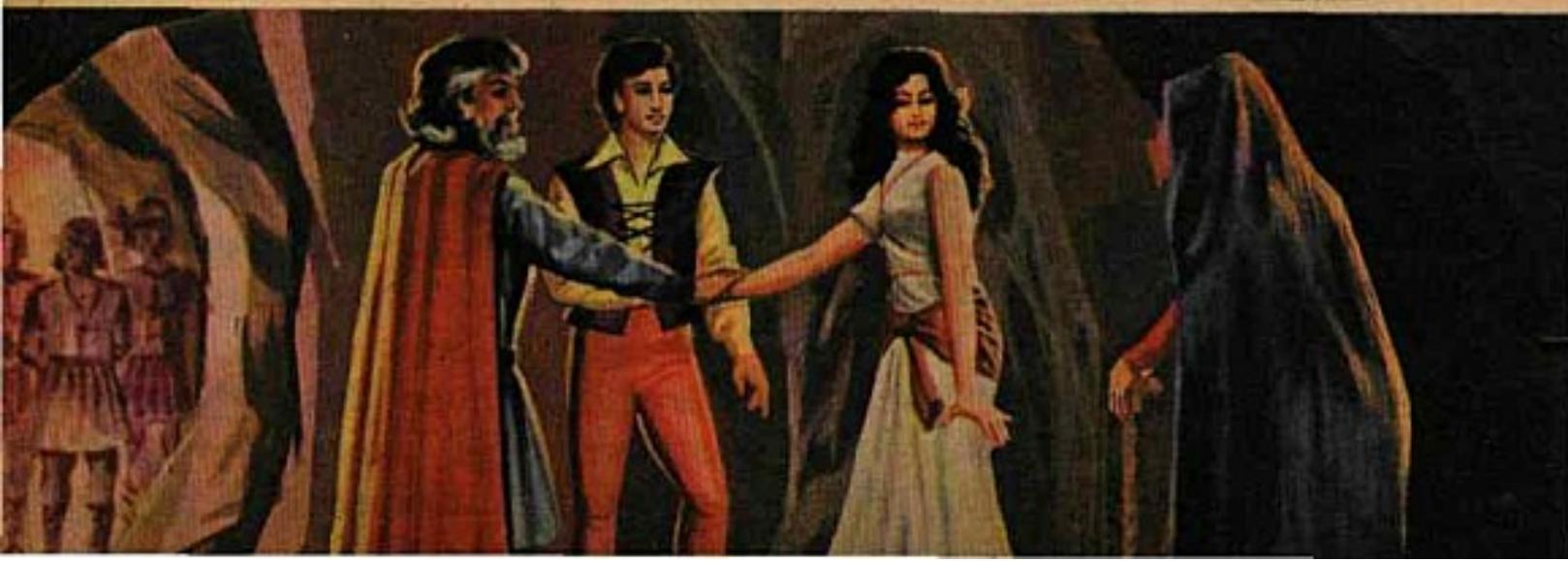
The old woman explained,

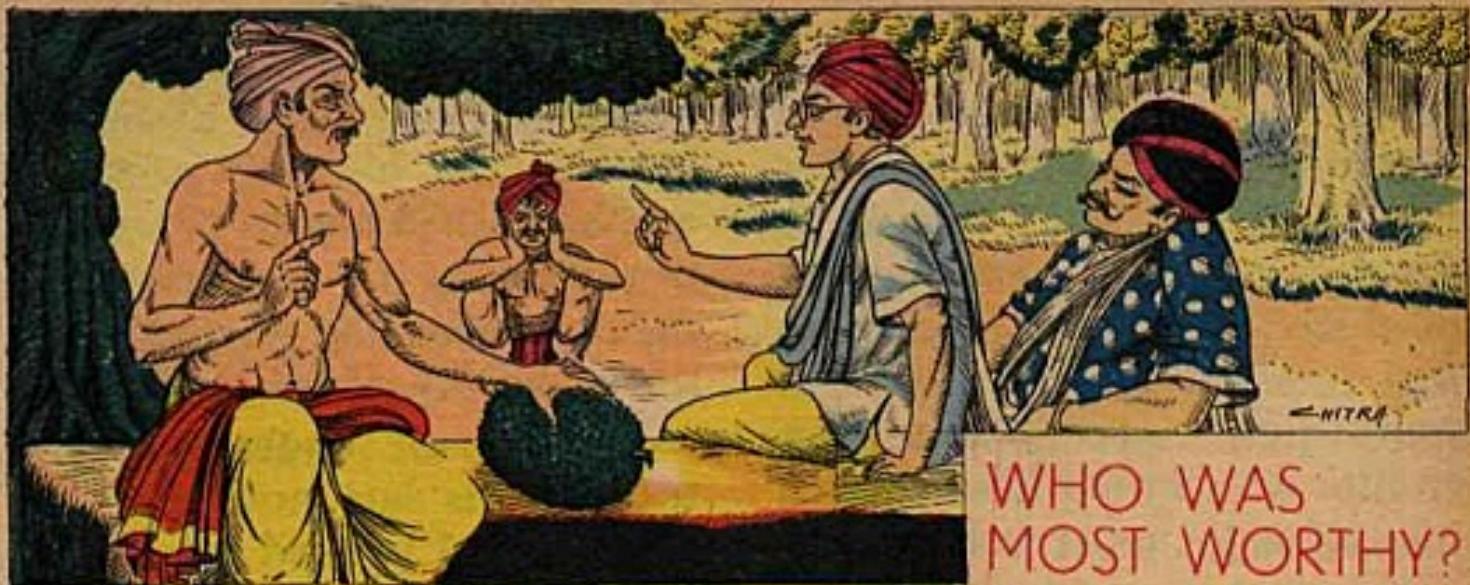
"My daughter was under a curse and so she looked like an apparition. It had been so ordained that the day a young man of truth would promise to marry her she would come out of the curse. The day at last has come."

The king performed their marriage with great pomp. He passed the order that the two elder princes be banished. He then crowned the youngest prince as the king and himself retired to solitude.

But the first thing the young king did was to lift the order of banishment against his brothers. "They are not especially bad. They have only been the victims of the forces, laziness and violence, dominating the atmosphere. When there would be a better time, they too no doubt would act better," he said.

Prof. Manoj Das





WHO WAS MOST WORTHY?

Three persons by chance met each other on their way to the town. One was a peasant, another was a trader and the third one was a teacher.

It was a long way and they forgot the pain of walking talking of many things.

But a time came when all three felt hungry. It was not possible to forget hunger by talks and discussions. There was no shop or inn on the roadside where they could find any food. However, soon they came across an orchard where ripe fruits abounded. They called the owner of the orchard and requested him to give them a jackfruit. Their request was granted.

The peasant was asked to cut the jackfruit into three portions. While he was about to cut it, he thought: "Cannot I enjoy a bigger share of the fruit than

the others? In my village I am known as a clever man. Let me be a little clever now."

He said, "My friends, I think we should divide the fruit into four parts. He who is employed in the noblest of professions among us should enjoy the fourth part, in addition to his normal share!"

The peasant had no doubt that his own profession would be voted by his two companions as the noblest profession. For, he produces food. Trade or teaching can go on only when people have food to eat!

But the teacher said, "Your proposal reminds me of an old story. Once upon a time there was a nobleman who had three sons. The sons whiled away their time in merry making, without taking any interest in the family estate. That made the nobleman very unhappy.

“One day he called his three sons to his side and showed them a ring and said that after his death his estate would be divided into four parts instead of three. After the three sons had received a part each, the fourth part would go as a prize to him who would have proved himself as his most worthy heir.

“And how to decide who had proved the most worthy? The nobleman showed them a beautiful ring and said that before his death he would give the ring to the son whom he would consider his most worthy heir.

“After a few years the nobleman died. The estate was divided into four parts. But then arose a strange problem. Each of the three sons produced a ring which he claimed to have been given to him by his late father. The rings were all alike.

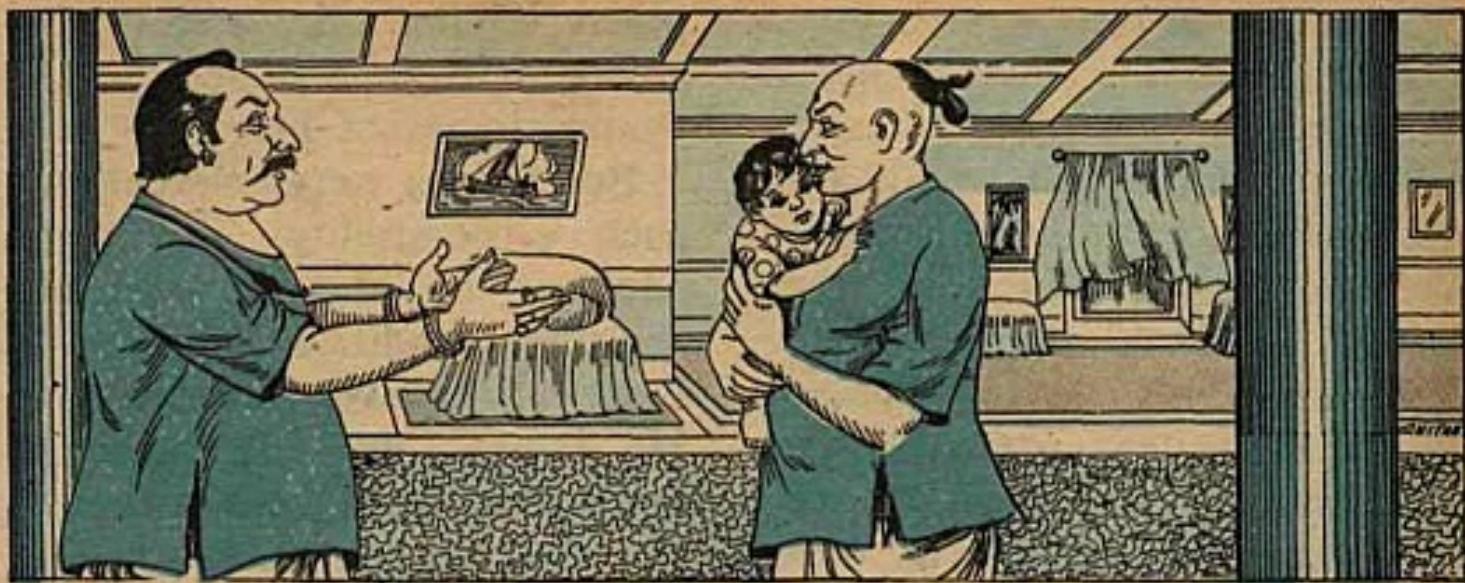
“This was the mystery: the nobleman had given a ring to each one of his sons privately and had asked him to be worthy of possessing it. As a result all the three sons had proved themselves worthy of his reputation.

“When all understood the trick of the late noblemen, all laughed and praised him. The sons too were sensible. Instead of quarrelling among themselves, they spent the fourth portion of the property in erecting a school and a charitable dispensary in memory of their father.

“Now, whatever be our profession, our hunger is the same. So let us enjoy the fruit equally. But since it is a very big fruit, let us give away the fourth portion to some other man who needs it.”

They found a poor traveller resting under a tree and shared the fruit with him.





Rich and poor

Ramdas and Shyamdas were two intimate friends. Ramdas was a successful businessman. Shyamdas, on the otherhand, flourished as a great scholar. Shyamdas was not wealthy. His property did not amount to even one-tenth of that of Ramdas. But such disparity in their wealth did not stand in the way of their friendship. Ramdas was proud of his friend's scholarship. Shyamdas was happy with his friend's prosperity.

Ramdas was blessed with a son. Some time later, Shyamdas got a daughter. The boy was named Madhav, and the girl, Radha.

Soon after Radha was born, unfortunately, her mother died.

So Ramdas took charge of the infant girl and brought her to his palatial house. He and his wife looked upon the girl as their own child. As time passed people knew Radha as their daughter.

After a few years a thought occurred to Ramdas. "Why not I leave my son with Shyamdas? I do not wish him to remain uneducated like me. If he lives under my friend's influence, he would naturally become a scholar."

He passed on the charge of his son to Shyamdas.

Thus were their children exchanged. Radha, though a poor man's daughter, was brought up in great luxury.

Madhav proved a nice boy. He inherited his foster-father's knowledge and wisdom. As he grew up, he forgot about his real parentage and knew Shyamdas as his father. Soon the young Madhav became well-known for his talent. People of far and near praised him. Ramdas was delighted to see his son growing up in this fashion. And Shyamdas was delighted to see him growing as his worthy pupil.

Because Ramdas and Shyamdas were so close to each other, Madhav and Radha too used to play with each other from their childhood.

Madhav liked Radha very

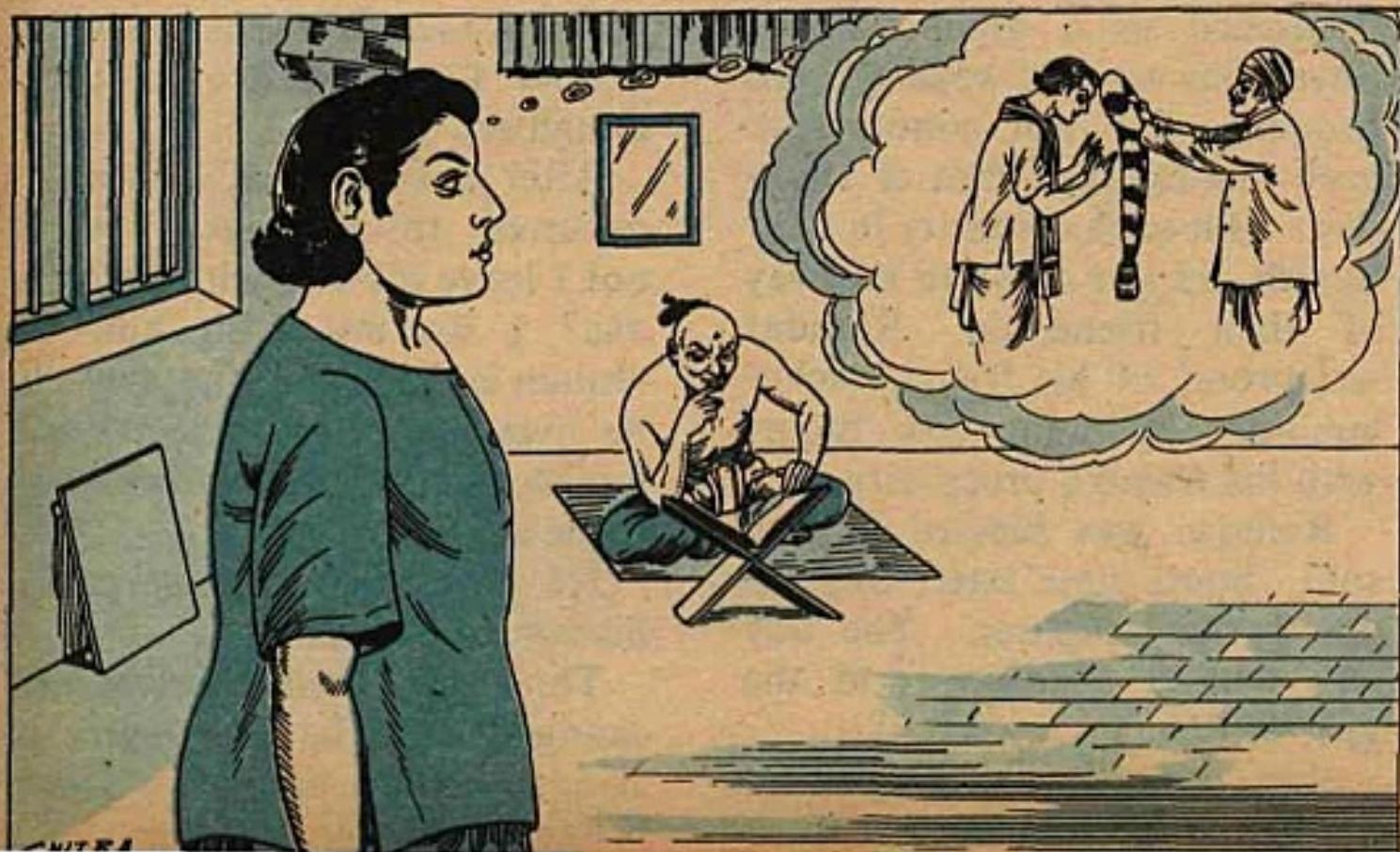
much. When he became a young man, no wonder that he would dream of marrying her!

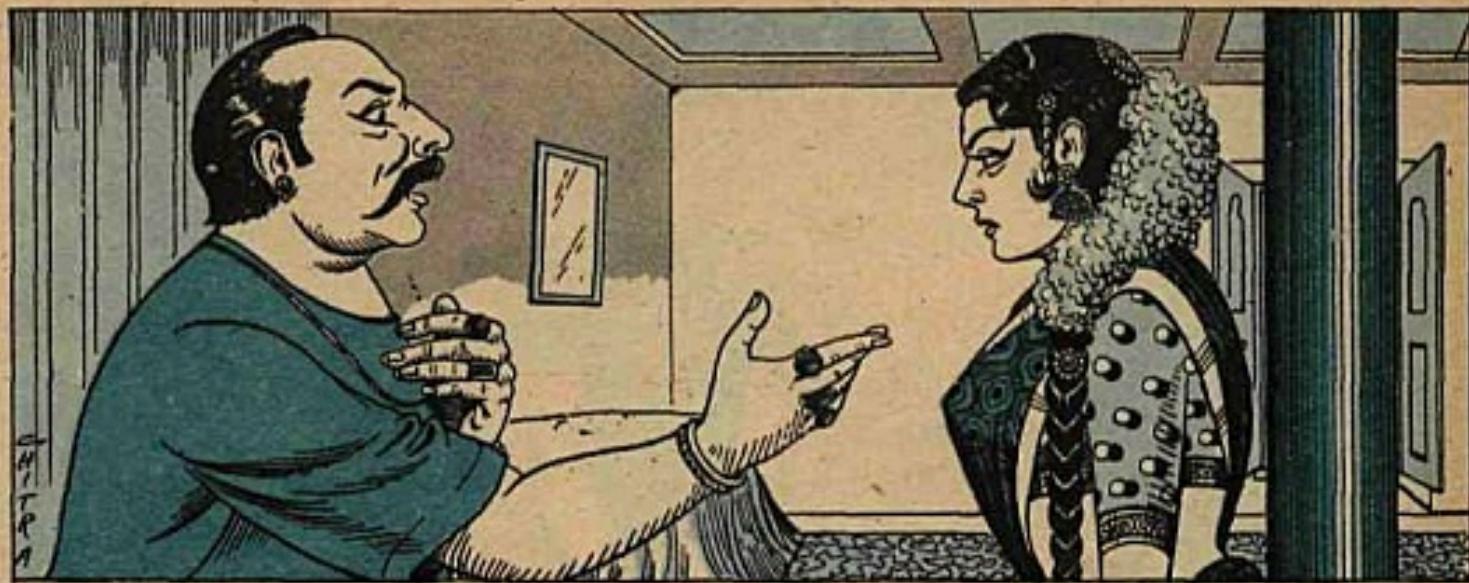
But Radha never thought of such a possibility. She liked Madhav, but she did not relish the poor condition in which he lived. Whenever she went to his house, she felt eager to come away from there, although she liked his company.

A time came when Ramdas and Shyamdas decided that Madhav and Radha should get married to each other.

Shyamdas told Madhav, "My son! I am thinking of bringing Radha as my daughter-in-law. What do you say?"

"Father! You are only





echoing what was already in my mind. I am most grateful to you," replied Madhav.

And Ramdas asked Radha, " My daughter! I have chosen Madhav for my son-in-law. What do you say?"

" Well, father, Madhav is an excellent choice, no doubt, but don't you think that they are rather poor for us?" replied Radha.

Ramdas was a bit shocked. But he appreciated the girl's frankness and said gravely, " It is high time for you to know that Madhav is the heir to all the wealth you are enjoying.

He is my son. You are Shyamdas's daughter. You were brought up by us because your mother died while you were an infant. Lest Madhav should become a spoilt child; I left him under your father's care. I am happy that he is a famous scholar today. Do you still have any hesitation to marry him?"

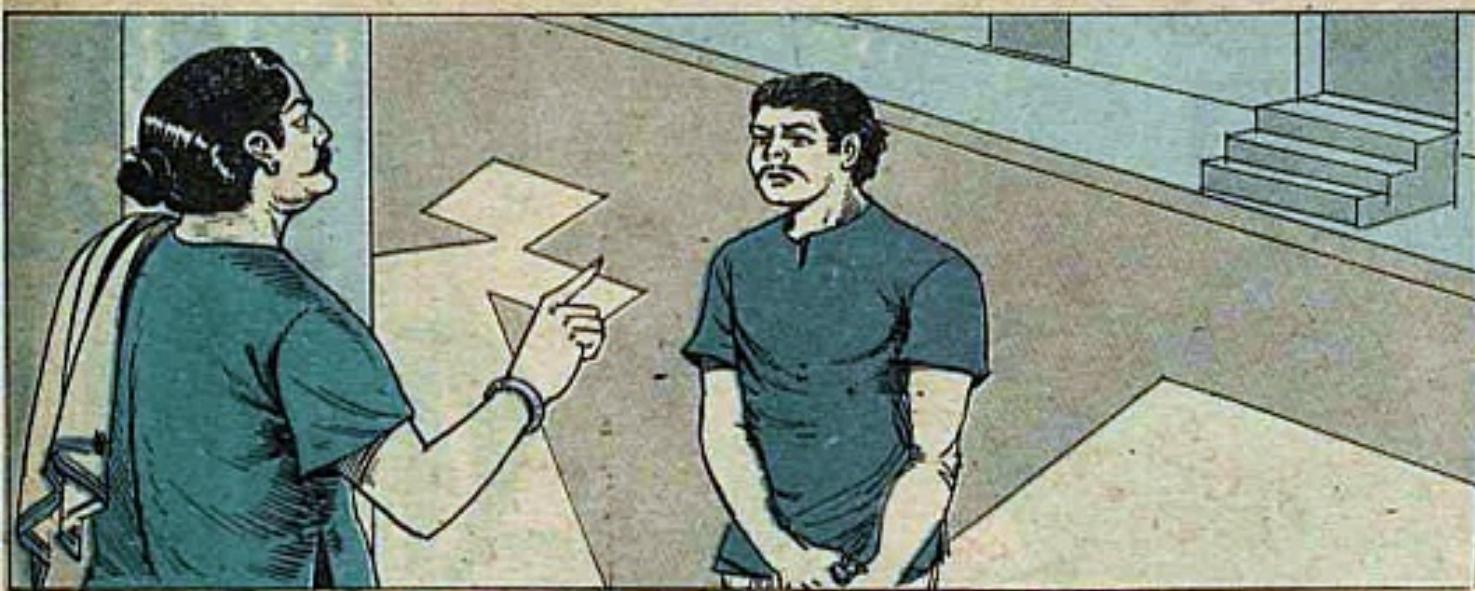
Radha lowered her head and her eyes moistened. Ramdas patted her affectionately and said, " I know, you had never had any hesitation!"

Their marriage was performed with a great deal of pomp.

Cowards die many times before their deaths ;
The valiant never taste of death but once.

— Shakespeare

' Mid pleasures and palaces though we roam
Be it even so humble, there is no place like home.— J. Howard Payne



DRIVING AWAY THE GHOST

Gangaram was a young villager willing to work hard. He was in search of some job. But who would give him one in the village? So he proceeded to the town. He approached a shopkeeper and said, "I promise to work hard and faithfully. Will you please employ me in your shop or in your household?"

"I will," said the shopkeeper, "But if you agree to my conditions."

"What are they?" asked Gangaram.

"Well, I will pay you two hundred rupees at the end of a year. But if you desert me before a year is complete, you will get nothing. On the other hand if I turn you out for any

reason before the completion of a year, I will pay you double of your salary, that is, four hundred rupees. You will be served food twice a day. The leaf you spread before you would be filled with rice," said the shopkeeper.

"I agree to your conditions. Let us request some gentlemen from the village to bear witness to our agreement," proposed Gangaram.

They called four or five villagers and informed them about the contract between them. Gangaram began to work and he worked hard and sincerely.

But the shop-keeper was a crook. He used to employ people with the motive of ex-

tracting some free work from them. Disgusted by his treatment and behaviour, his servants used to leave the work before a year was complete, thereby getting nothing. The shop-keeper had always a temporary servant.

When it was lunch time, Gangaram sat near the kitchen spreading a leaf before himself. The shop-keeper's wife came out with a bowl of rice, but to his amazement, she sprinkled the rice all over his leaf and left. She did not show herself again!

Gangaram finished his meal without satisfying his hunger. He met the shop-keeper and

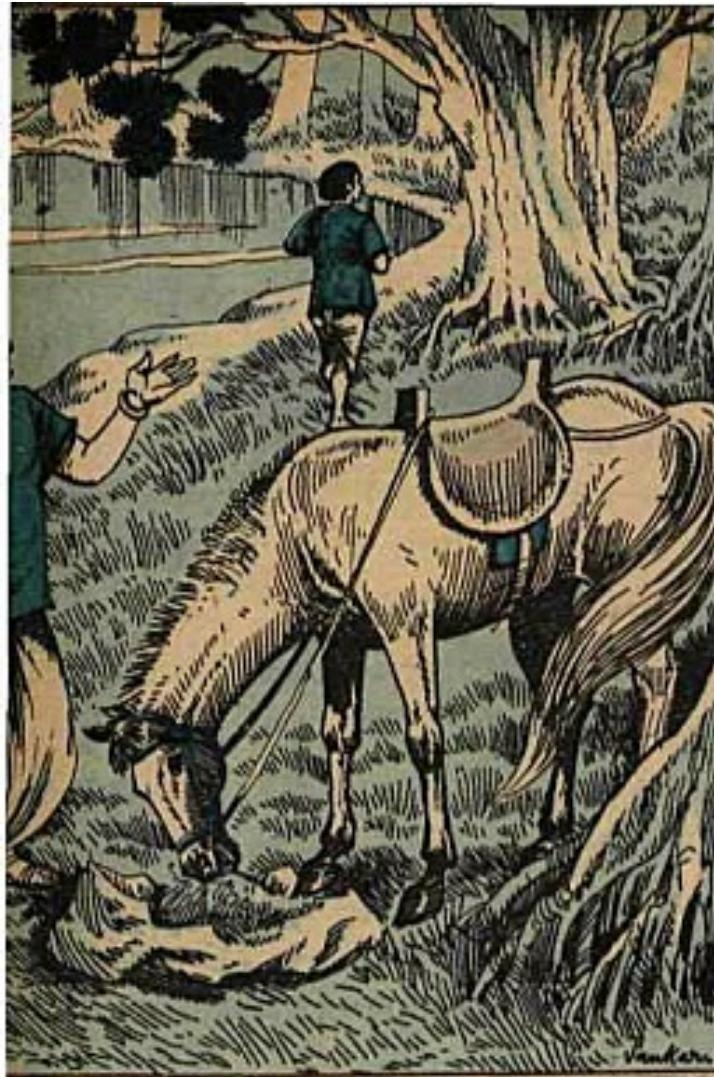
complained, "I did not get enough rice to eat, sir!"

"How do you say so?" the shop-keeper frowned upon him. "Did I not tell you that the leaf would be filled with rice? And was the leaf not filled? I never promised that rice would be heaped on your leaf!"

"I understand the situation, sir," said the hungry Gangaram.

At night Gangaram managed to prepare a big leaf with several leaves put together and spread it before himself. The shop-keeper's wife sprinkled rice, but she had to sprinkle much more than her heart would permit in order to cover the whole leaf.





"How is it that you have spread such a big leaf?" the shop-keeper demanded to know.

"Sir, in our agreement there was nothing about the size of the leaf!" replied Gangaram. The shop-keeper had to keep quiet.

A few days later, the shop-keeper started for his father-in-law's house. He rode a horse while Gangaram had to walk behind him, with his luggage. The shop-keeper's wife had prepared sweets and ghee-baked delicious breads for her husband while for Gangaram she had given a few dry breads and a

behind the horse Gangaram made good of his master's food-packet and when the master felt hungry, handed over to him the few dry breads. The shop-keeper was very angry with his wife and threw away the breads at the horse.

"Do not grieve, sir, let me run to your father-in-law's house ahead of you. I will inform them how hungry you are. They would keep ready some luxurious items for you. You trot leisurely behind me."

"Let it be so," the shop-keeper agreed.

Gangaram ran to the destination and informed the shop-keeper's father-in-law about his visit and added, "But your son-in-law is suffering from a very bad kind of stomach disorder. He is ashamed about it. So, none of you should mention it to him. But please do not give him anything except a couple of dry breads and a glass of water. Anything more than that might do him great harm!"

When the shop-keeper reached there he was received without a smile because all were sad on account of his suffering. He was duly served with a couple of dry breads.

The hungry shop-keeper was shocked at the treatment. He was furious, but he could not give vent to his mood. He could hardly eat. Seeing the condition of their beloved son-in-law, the relatives drew long faces. That made the shop-keeper even more furious.

Gangaram, of course, enjoyed an excellent dinner.

At the earliest opportunity, Gangaram whispered in his master's ear, "Sir, you are obviously most unwelcome here. Who on earth has ever heard of a son-in-law being entertained with a couple of dry breads and a glass of plain water and faces as gloomy as rotten water-

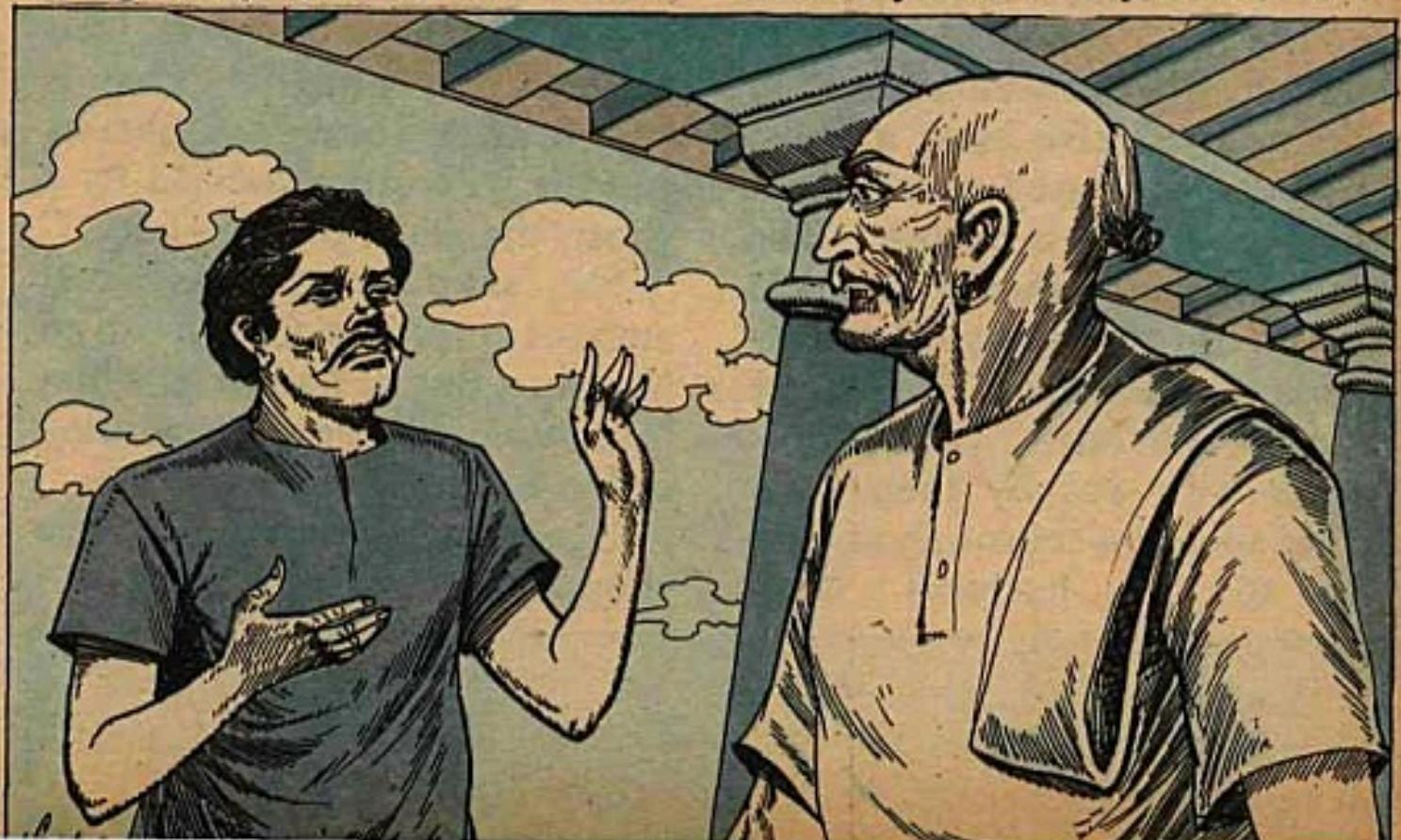
melons? A man of dignity that you are, it does not seem proper for you to stay here any longer."

"You are right. Let us go away immediately," said the shop-keeper. They left at midnight.

They were near their village before noon. Gangaram proposed, "Sir, let me run ahead of you. I will ask your wife to prepare some delicious dishes for you."

"Very good. I am dying of hunger," said the shop-keeper.

Gangaram ran as quickly as possible and meeting his master's wife, said, "I regret to inform you that my master has





been suddenly possessed by a ghost. Please be ready to drive the ghost out of him in the usual way!"

Thereafter he ran back to his master and said, "I am horrified to find your wife possessed by a ghost. Please prepare to do the needful as soon as you see her!"

Now, the common method followed to drive away a ghost from the possessed was to beat the person with a broom. The shop-keeper gathered an old broom thrown away by someone and entered his own house keeping it handy.

His wife was by then quite ready to give a thorough thrashing to her husband. They

dashed towards each other, fought with their brooms, screamed and shouted abuses till neighbours collected there and separated them.

When all were bewildered, Gangaram stepped forward and made a clean breast of his mischief. He said, "I wanted my master to know how one feels when one is hungry. That is all! Besides, both my master and his wife are possessed by a ghost, the ghost of miserliness."

The shop-keeper was most anxious to relieve Gangaram of his job. But he had to give him four hundred rupees according to the condition agreed upon.

Gangaram was happy. The shop-keeper was wiser.

PHOTO CAPTION CONTEST



Mr. P. Jayaraj



Mr. P. Sundaram

- These two photographs are somewhat related. Can you think of suitable captions? Could be single words, or several words, but the two captions must be related to each other.
- Rs. 20 will be awarded as prize for the best caption. Remember, your entry must reach us by 30th November.
- Winning captions will be announced in JANUARY issue
- Write your entry on a POST CARD, specify the month, give your full name, address, age and post to:

PHOTO CAPTION CONTEST
CHANDAMAMA MAGAZINE
MADRAS-600 026

Result of Photo Caption Contest held in September Issue

The Prize is awarded to

Mr. M. J. Ramakrishnan

P. 72-B Sardar Shankar Road,

CALCUTTA 29.

Winning Entry—'Gratifying Glance'—'Glorious Stance'



WIT AND ASTROLOGY

In a certain village lived a Brahmin who passed himself as an astrologer! No doubt, he had once lived with a true astrologer and had remembered a few primary laws of astrology. He could even recite a proverb or two in Sanskrit. But for the most part he bluffed. At times his predictions came true—by chance of course! But that was enough for the simple village folks to believe him.

Som Shastri, another Brahmin of the village met the astrologer one morning on the road and asked him, "Well, will you be pleased to tell me whether this day will bring me any good luck or not?"

The astrologer pretended to meditate for a moment and then said, "Better, conduct yourself very carefully. Do not accept anybody's advice today. If you will, you shall be loser."

Som Shastri returned home and avoided meeting people that day. But a little later a neighbour, Ram Shastri, walked into his house and said, "Hurry up, Som, let us go to the next village. A great feast is going on there and all the Brahmins are welcome."

But Som Shastri had decided not to accept anybody's advice that day. Besides, he knew that in his own village a rich merchant was conducting a religious function that very day. So, he decided to ignore his neighbour's proposal. Ram Shastri went away, alone.

Som Shastri went to the merchant's house in his own village and participated in the function and received one rupee as gift.

But late in the afternoon his neighbour, Ram Shastri, returned from the next village and exclaimed, "Do you know how

much we received today in the next village? Five rupees and a pair of clothes each! Why did you refuse to accompany me?"

Som Shastri repented very much for not listening to Ram Shastri's advice. He became terribly angry with the astrologer. For, it was because the astrologer had asked him not to be guided by anybody's advice that he had decided to ignore Ram's suggestion.

In a huff Som ran to the village headman and blurted out, "You should instantly punish the astrologer. He knows nothing of astrology and yet dares to advise people on important matters." Then he narrated all that had happened to him.

The headman summoned the astrologer to his presence and told him about Som Shastri's complaint and asked, "Why did you misguide Som? He is so much loser on account of you!"

The astrologer smiled and said, "Believe me, sir, I had said nothing to misguide Som Shastri. It was in his luck today to lose any chance of gain."

"But it was because you had asked him not to be guided by

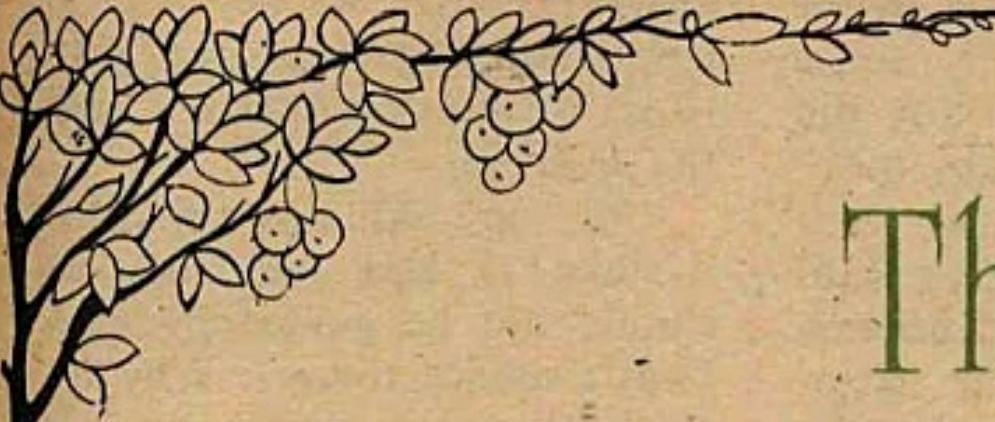
anybody that he decided to ignore Ram Shastri's suggestion to go to the next village!" said the headman.

"Er—sir! Don't you find his mistake? I had said that he should not be guided by anybody's advice today. Why on earth was he guided by my advice then? I was the first man to advise him. He should have thought of that!" replied the astrologer.

Neither the headman nor Som Shastri had any reply to this explanation of the astrologer. The astrologer went away merrily reciting some Sanskrit proverb which nobody understood. Som Shastri returned pensive.



"The pillows are leaking, Mum!"



The APR

Apricots are an ancient and widely travelled fruit. Over 4,000 years ago, they were cultivated in China, their country of origin. But they received their botanical name, *Prunus armeniaca* because they were introduced into Palestine from Armenia some time before the 10th century. They were soon growing profusely throughout the Holy Land and were the "apples of gold" referred to by Solomon in the Book of Proverbs.

Alexander the Great discovered them, during his campaigns in Asia Minor, and took them back to the Mediterranean countries from where they were exported to Southern Europe.

Writing in the 1st century AD, the Roman naturalist, Pliny called them Praecocia. This meant "early ripening" and it is from this name that we derive

our word, precocious. The Romans dedicated the fruit to the goddess, Venus, and used the apricot blossoms, which resemble small, white roses with a crimson centre, in love potions and in cosmetics.

In 1540, the apricot arrived in England. At that time its name, translated from the



LOOKING AT FRUITS

The second in our series about the history of fruits.

Spanish form, was spelt apricock (you can find it written this way in Shakespeare's *Richard the Third*, iv 29, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, iii 1). Our modern spelling is a corruption of the French abricot.

Unfortunately, the large fan-shaped trees were difficult to

grow in Britain's climate, their flower and fruit buds being easily destroyed by spring frosts. But the apricot had not finished its travels for, in the early part of the 18th century, the mission fathers took it to California and it is from the Santa Clara Valley that the finest of all apricots, the Moor Park variety, originates.

During the last century an effort was made to cultivate the fruit, on a large scale, in England and, by 1822, apricots were in great demand for dessert, jams and confectionery.

Today, apricot orchards are cultivated in Central and South-Eastern Asia, North Africa and the United States of America. The trees, which are drought resistant, can live up to a hundred years and one tree may have an annual yield of between 200 and 250 pounds of fruit.





WISDOM WORTH ONE RUPEE

While passing by a scholar's house, a merchant's son read a strange signboard: "Wisdom is sold here."

The young man was amused. He entered the house and asked the scholar about the price of wisdom.

"The price ranges from one rupee to ten thousand rupees," replied the scholar.

"If I buy one rupee worth of wisdom, will it do any good to me?" asked the young man.

"Who knows! It may give you benefit worth a lakh of rupees!" replied the scholar.

The young man gave a rupee and bought a piece of palm leaf on which was written: "Never make any unnecessary comment.

Never intervene when two important persons are discussing or debating between themselves!"

Back at home the young man showed the piece of wisdom to his father. But the father was a miser. He rebuked his son for having wasted a rupee and asked him to return it to the scholar and get back the rupee.

The young man returned to the scholar's house and placed the leaf before him and requested him to give him back his rupee. The scholar returned the rupee after the young man promised that he would not use the wisdom he had received.

A few days passed. The king of the land was passing through

the street with his two queens. At a jeweller's shop, the queens noticed a precious necklace with blue diamonds. Both were charmed by it. After they returned to the palace both sent their maids to buy the necklace. Both the maids reached the shop at the same time. The shop-keeper did not know whom to sell it. The maids quarrelled between themselves.

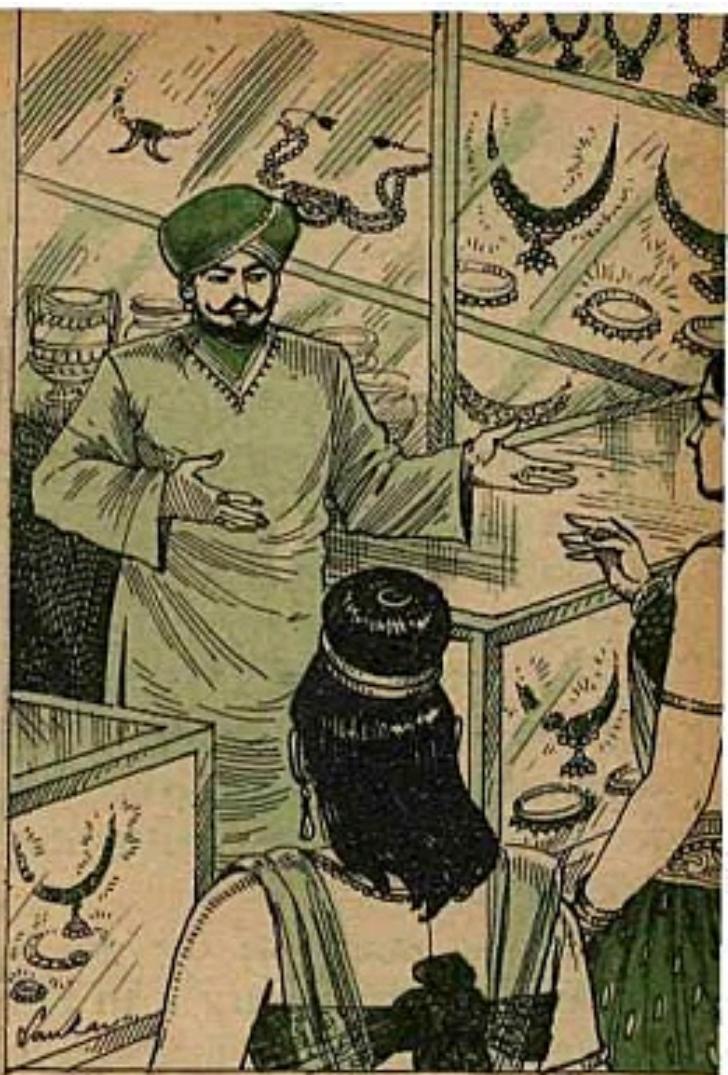
Just then the young man was passing by. He commented, "What a funny situation! Who would take the necklace? Ha ha! God knows!"

The shop-keeper explained to the maids, "I have only one such necklace. I will sell it to her who came first."

Each of the maids claimed to have arrived there first. After some more quarrelling, they left the shop without any of them buying the necklace.

The two queens heard everything. They appealed to the king to decide who deserved to have the necklace. The king said, "First I must know whose maid reached the shop first. Was there nobody nearby to see them?"

"Yes, a certain young man was there, a merchant's son," said the maid.



Needless to say, if the young man would not have made those unnecessary comments, he would not have been noticed.

Soon the young man was summoned to the king's court. But he was afraid of displeasing any of the queens. He was in panic. His father advised him to hurry to the scholar and buy some advice.

The scholar said, "The advice which can save you from the present crisis would cost five hundred rupees. But if you wish to be saved also from some future crisis, you have to pay two thousand rupees for the advice and you must be pre-

pared to spend one lakh rupees to work out that advice."

"Please give me the advice worth five hundred rupees to save me from the immediate crisis," said the young man.

The scholar gave him a piece of palm leaf on which was written, "No value is given to a mad man's statement."

The young man got the clue. At the court he acted like a mad man. The king asked him to go away. The young man felt relieved.

But the maids of the queens became terribly angry with him. "We will teach you a lesson for your pretending as mad," they threatened him.

The young man, in his anxiety to save himself from their wrath, ran to the scholar again. The scholar said, " Didn't I give you the hint of a future crisis? Now

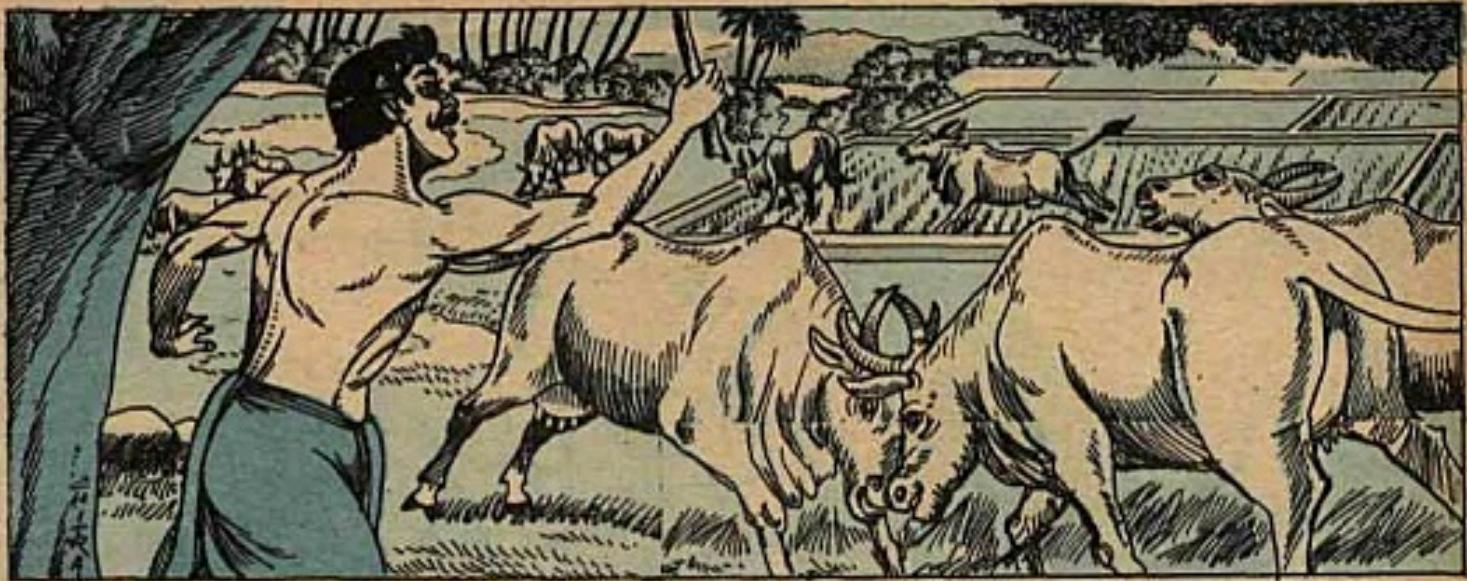
my advice would cost you two thousand rupees."

The young man and his father paid the sum. The scholar handed over a piece of palm leaf in which was written, "Buy the necklace yourself and present it to the king."

The young man's father bought the necklace paying a lakh of rupees and made a gift of it to the king. The king was pleased with the father and the son and so the maids of the queens did not dare to do any harm to them.

It was only then that the young man realised that if he would have kept the wisdom worth one rupee and would have paid due attention to it, then he would have been spread of all these troubles. That advice had warned him against making unnecessary comments.





IDEAL FRIENDS AT LAST

In a certain land the number of thieves seemed to be on a rapid growth. To check this, the king decided to hang the thieves, when caught, instead of merely imprisoning them. This produced the desired result. Theft and robbery were hardly reported any more.

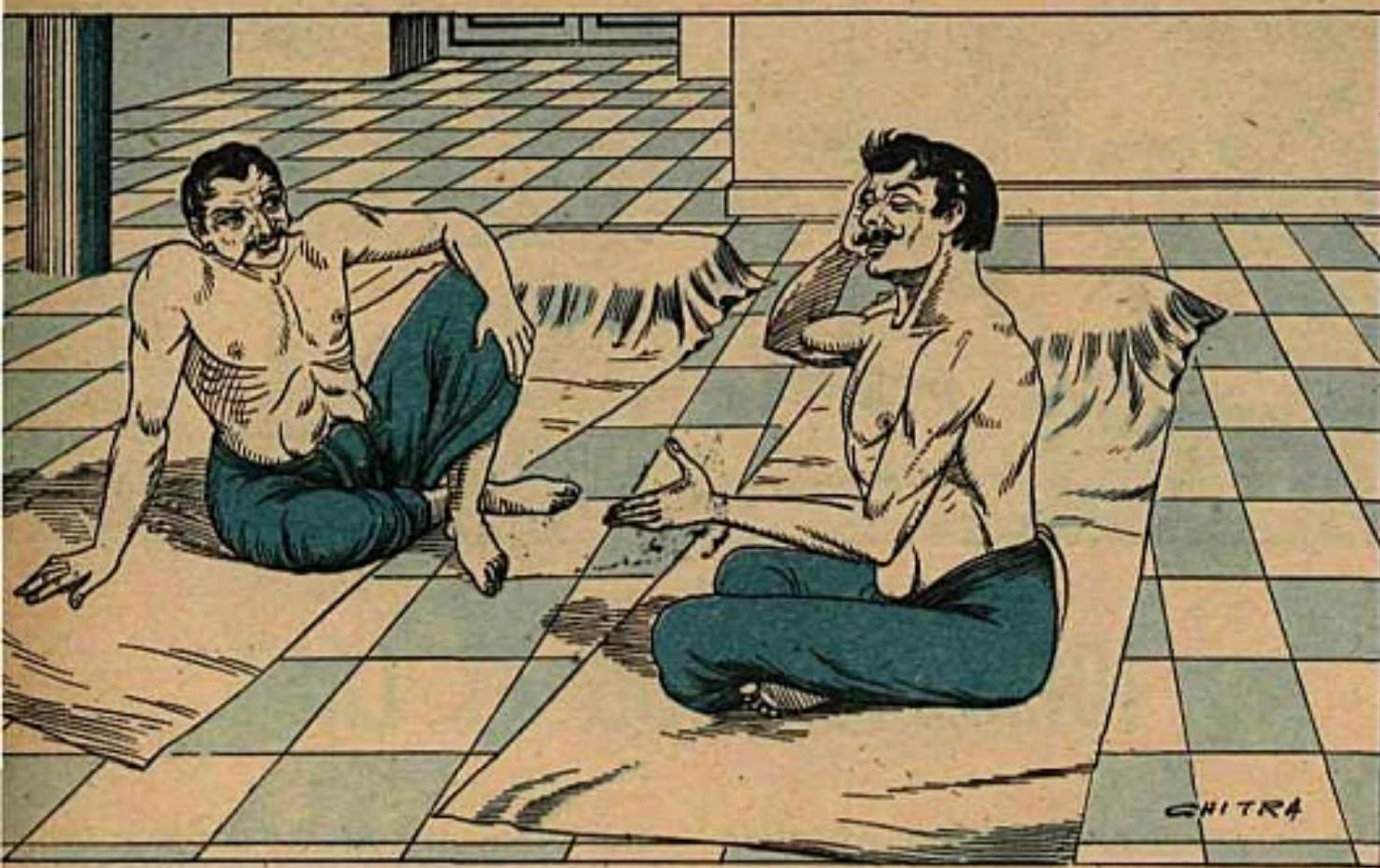
Bhola and Giridhar, two thieves, were great friends. They decided to give up their practice and to find out some honest means of earning their livelihood.

They went to a neighbouring village and got employment in the house of a wealthy man. Bhola was required to take the cattle to the fields and Giridhar was required to water the plants

in their master's garden and orchard.

On the first day Bhola drove the cattle to the field; but he had an extremely hard time keeping them under his control. The cows often tried to enter other people's corn fields and Bhola had to constantly run to scare them back. He was quite exhausted when he finally returned to his master's house with the cattle.

Giridhar's condition was no better. It was a very hard job to pull water from a deep well and to pour it on the plants which were numerous. He too was extremely tired at the close of the day.



CHITRA

At night the two friends enquired about each other's job.

Bhola said, "To be frank, I am very much satisfied with my work. I drove the cattle to the field and went to sleep under a tree. When it was evening the cattle returned to me of their own. I drove them back home, merrily whistling."

"The same with me," said Giridhar, "I finished watering the plants in an hour. The rest of the day I listened to the sweet chirping of the birds."

"Excellent!" said Bhola, "Now, for sake of a change, let me do your work tomorrow. You go to the field with the

cattle. Such arrangement would increase the experiences of both of us. Don't you think so?"

"Is there any doubt about it?" said Giridhar happily.

It of course did not take very long for both to understand each other's bluff the next day.

But while working in the orchard, Bhola had grown curious about one thing: He had observed that although he poured jarfuls of water at the root of a certain mango tree, the earth became dry instantly. He had decided to search for the cause secretly at night.

The two friends no more discussed about the condition of

their works when they met at night. Instead, they lay down on their beds as soon as possible.

After a while Bhola rose and carrying a shovel, went to dig the earth at the root of the mango tree. But he did not know that Giridhar was following him.

Soon after Bhola began to dig the earth, his shovel struck against some metal pot. Bhola looked around to be sure that he was not seen by anyone. But there stood Giridhar, just behind him!

"What are you doing, dear?" asked Giridhar.

"Nothing much. I was

levelling the ground here so that it can absorb water better," Bhola replied.

"But did I not hear a metallic sound?" asked Giridhar.

"It must be stone, not metal. Let us go back to our beds," said Bhola.

Both lay down on their beds once more. Bhola had thought of resuming his search after Giridhar had fallen asleep. But unfortunately, he fell asleep first himself.

It was now Giridhar's turn to visit the mango tree with the shovel. He soon found out two jars full of gold mohurs. He must hide them somewhere!





There was a small, shallow pond nearby. He sunk the jars in the mud and returned to his bed.

Bhola woke up soon thereafter. Before long he could see that something had been taken out from the spot, leaving deep holes. He rushed back to his room and looked at Giridhar closely. Giridhar's clothes were muddy and wet. Bhola guessed that he must have hid the property in the pond. On a search in the pond, he discovered the two jars easily. Carrying the jars on his shoulder, he hurried towards his own village.

When Giridhar opened his eyes and did not see Bhola, he

ran to the pond to be sure of the jars. But they were missing. He understood that Bhola had escaped with the property. He too ran towards his village.

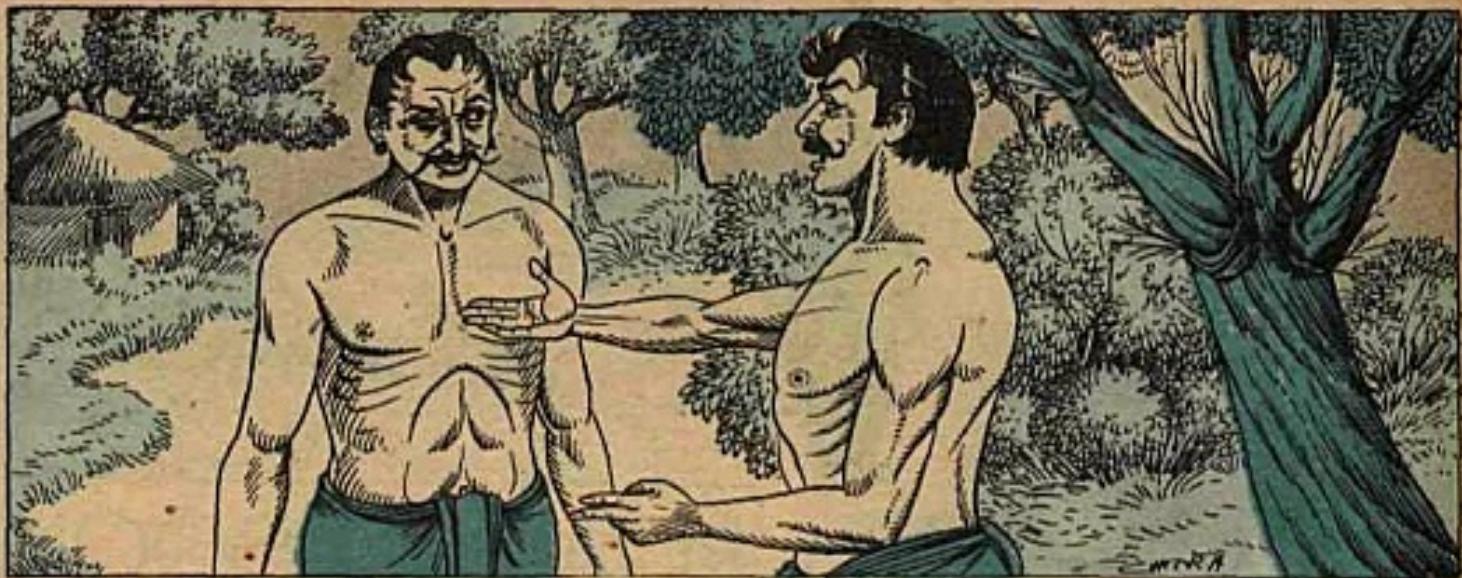
Before long he could see Bhola carrying the jars at a distance. Giridhar took to a diversion and, about a furlong ahead of Bhola, he threw a shoe on the road and going a little further, he threw the remaining shoe of the same pair. Then he climbed a tree and waited to see the fun.

While walking, Bhola saw the shoe, but ignored it. However, advancing a little farther when he saw the other shoe of the same pair, he thought it proper to go back and collect the first one as well. But what use carrying the heavy jars back? He placed them under the very tree on which Giridhar sat.

As soon as Bhola turned his back, Giridhar came down and lifting up the jars, went his way as fast as possible.

Bhola gathered the pair of shoes and returned to the tree only to find the jars gone!

He ran to Giridhar's house. But on reaching there he was intrigued to find the women of the house wailing aloud.



"What is the matter?" he asked.

"Giridhar is dead!" said the women. Bhola saw Giridhar lying on a mat, his body covered with a linen.

"I see!" sighed Bhola and said, "He was my greatest friend. Now I must do as he had desired. He had told me that if he died before me, I must carry his body and press it on a bush of thorns. I must do that at once."

Bhola lifted up Giridhar's body and before anyone could

stop him, rushed out of the house and ran towards the meadow.

Giridhar suddenly gave him a jerk and got down from his shoulder.

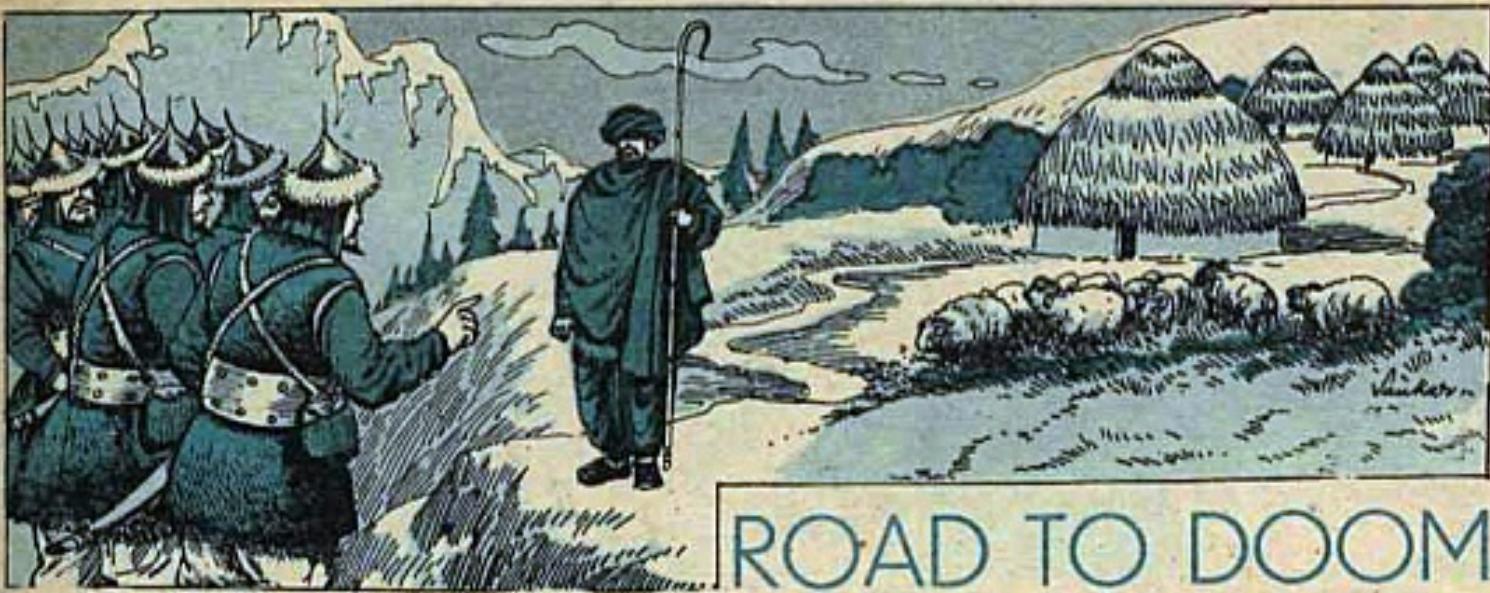
"We are fools," he said, "to try to outwit each other. Aren't there two jars? Come on, let us be satisfied with one each and spend the rest of our life happily, as ideal friends!"

Bhola embraced his friend. They, no doubt, lived happily thereafter.

The oldest tree in the world?

According to the Guinnen Book of Records, a bristlecone pine which lives in eastern Nevada, America, is the oldest in the world. It is believed to be about 4,900 years old.





ROAD TO DOOM

Long, long ago, the frontier of Nepal was often invaded by a notorious gang of dacoits. They plundered the villages and killed people who tried to check them.

One day the gang entered Nepal with the aim of plundering the house of a rich merchant whose daughter's marriage was to be performed that evening. They intended to take away the jewellery and other valuable things which the merchant must have arranged as gifts for his daughter.

But the gang did not know the way to Falana, the merchant's village.

On the border of Nepal lived a lonely shepherd. The gang approached him and asked him, "Do you know the way to Falana?"

"I know!" replied the shepherd.

"Is it true that the rich merchant of that village is performing the marriage of his daughter tonight?" the gang demanded to know.

The shepherd had no difficulty in understanding the motive of the gang. He felt very anxious for the merchant. However, he said, "So far as I know, what you have heard is true."

"Look here, we wish to march to the merchant's house. Now, come on, show us the way!" ordered the chief of the gang.

"I can describe the way to you. You have to proceed by yourselves," said the shepherd meekly.

"That won't do. You must lead the way, personally," shouted the chief.

"But how can I? My cow is about to give birth to a calf. I

cannot afford to leave my cottage today!" grumbled the shepherd.

"You fool!" screamed the chief, "Do you think that it is for you to decide whether you should come with us or not? We are determined to plunder the merchant's house. We must reach there somehow. If you do not accompany us, we will kill you and then go about to find out some other guide. On the other hand, if you obey us, you will be amply rewarded."

"All right then," said the shepherd after he had thought for a while, "I will prefer to lead you there than to die in your hands. But why do you wish to go right now? The marriage will take place at mid-

night. You should time your programme in such a way that you should be there just when the ornaments are brought out for display on the marriage platform. If you reach there earlier, they would hide the valuable things. You might kill them, but you might have to return empty-handed.

The gang considered the shepherd's advice and found it quite sound. They decided to wait there till evening. They cooked their delicious food and gave a sumptuous share to the shepherd.

The hilly region became quite dark soon after the sunset. The shepherd lit a torch and walked with the gang. Sometimes he walked ahead of them, showing



them the way. Sometimes he asked the procession to go ahead, himself stopping to show the light to the rear of the procession.

The roads were very narrow. Some of the roads passed below the rocks and went beyond the hills. Some other roads abruptly ended at a precipice or a gorge. The shepherd was thoroughly familiar with the entire region.

A thick mist hung on the hills and hardly anybody could benefit by the shepherd's torch. They had to depend on his oral directions.

The shepherd led them by a dangerously narrow road. It had come to a sudden end at one place and there was a steep chasm after that.

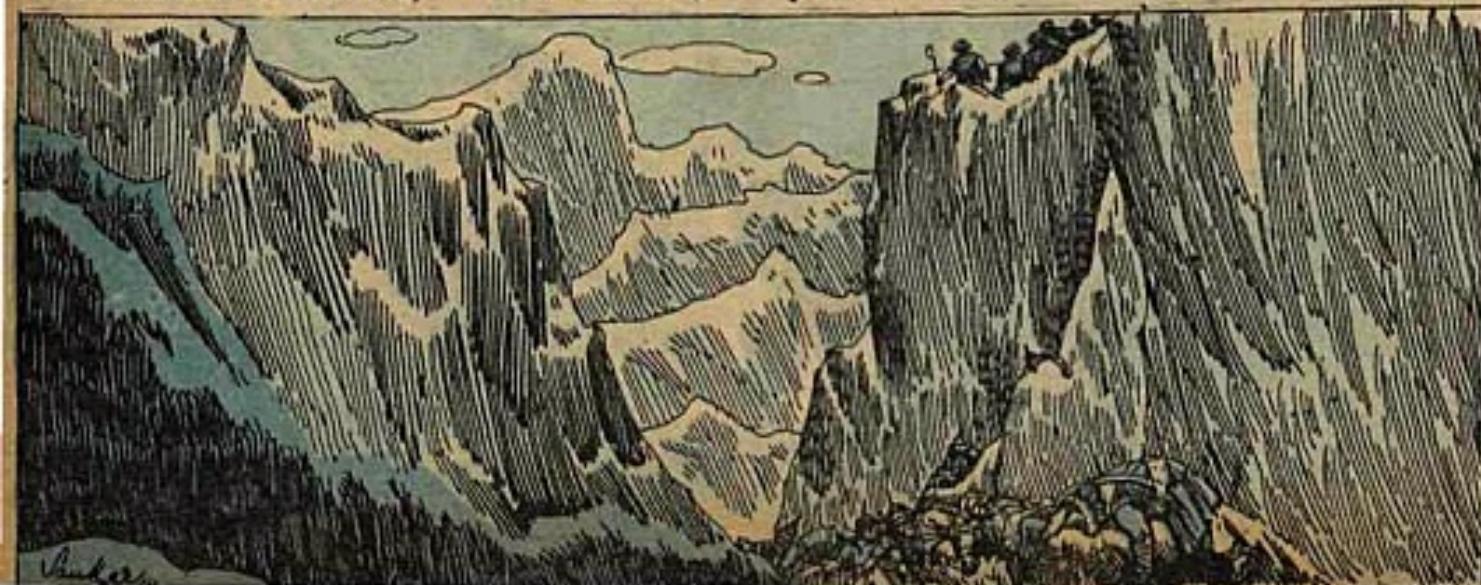
When the shepherd reached that dangerous spot, he stood aside and shouted, "Go ahead,

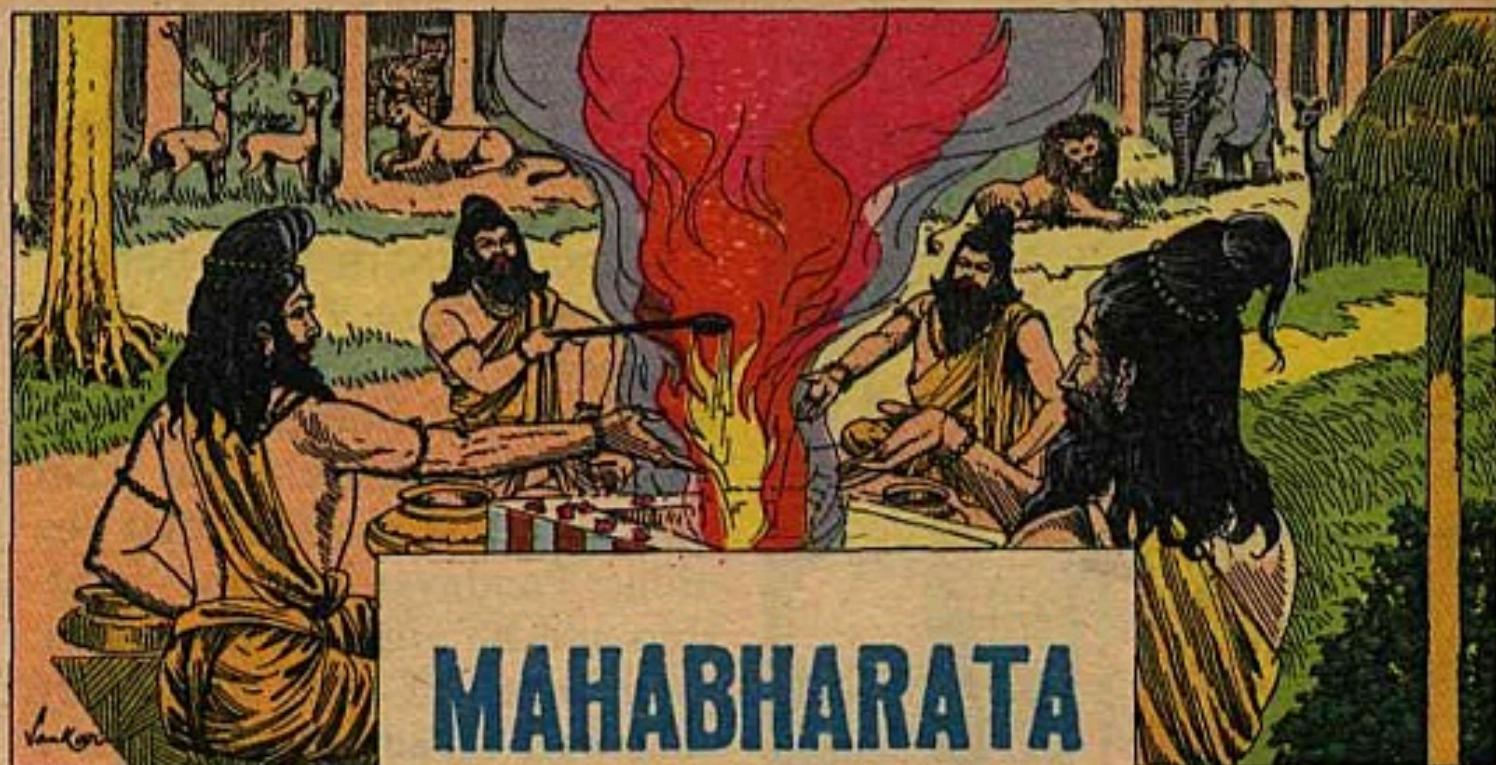
quick. We must reach Falana before midnight!"

The gang increased its speed and each one of them fell headlong into the chasm. Only the last one or two of them had stopped. But the shepherd pushed them forward and they too followed the rest.

The shepherd then changed his route and soon reached Falana. He narrated his adventure before the marriage crowd. Some people believed him, some did not. Next morning the merchant himself and other villagers rode with the shepherd to the chasm. They saw the entire gang lying on the sharp rocks far below, all killed.

The clever shepherd was not only rewarded by the merchant, but also by the king. The people were very happy to get rid of the notorious gang of plunderers.





MAHABHARATA

Dhritarashtra welcomed the guests, entertained them with fruits and sweet roots and arranged for their comfortable stay. The Pandavas passed the night lying around their mother. Next day they went out to see the neighbouring places, along with the ladies and the priests. At one place they saw a holy fire lit, with several sages sitting in prayer around it. Animals of the forest were freely and fearlessly wandering there. Birds too flew and flapped above them joyously. The Pandavas enjoyed the peaceful and beautiful atmosphere of this ashram. They made gifts of blankets and animal-skins to the sages and thereafter returned to Dhritarashtra.

Soon Vyasa, the great sage, arrived there, accompanied by his disciples. He told Dhritarashtra, "O King, I hope, your time is passing smoothly in the forest and I hope that you have been able to forget the sorrow of losing your sons. Further I hope that Gandhari is not facing any hardship on account of you and that Kunti Devi is looking after both of you with due affection and care."

From Vyasa all heard the mystery of the birth of Vidura: "Vidura was none other than Yudhishtira himself in a sense. Yama was born as Vidura, amidst you, under the curse of Mandaba, the celebrated sage. The same Yama was also incarnated as Yudhishtira. That



Draupadi and Subhadra used to sit around Vyasa, listening to wonderful stories of the hoary past.

Once Dhritarashtra opened his heart before Vyasa: "Your gracious visit is a blessing to me! I do not bother about my life after my death. But what worries me is the fact that the noble Pandavas suffered hardship and humiliation due to the foolishness of my sons. My sons were killed in the battle. I wonder what happened to the souls of those youths and their sons. I would have no peace of mind unless I know about their condition."

While Dhritarashtra spoke this, Gandhari could not check her tears. Kunti, Draupadi, Subhadra and other ladies too did alike. Gandhari prostrated herself before Vyasa and said, "Sixteen years have passed since the death of my sons. My husband continues to feel bereaved. Draupadi is lamenting the death of her brothers and sons. Subhadra weeps for Abhimanyu. Bhurishrava's wife wails remembering her husband, her sons and father-in-law. Hundred wives of my hundred sons are in grief. Kindly do

explains how Vidura's spirit merged in Yudhishtira. It was possible by the force of Vidura's Yoga. This is the fact behind the episode."

The Pandavas lived in the ashram, along with their families, for a month. Vyasa visited the place once more during their stay. His talks charmed everybody. His visit coincided with the visit of Narada, the sage, Parvata, Devala, Viswavasu, Tumvur and Chitrasen. Yudhishtira received them with due honour on behalf of Dhritarashtra. The Pandavas, Dhritarashtra, other guests as well as the ladies like Kunti,

something to remove the sorrow of all these people."

Vyasa asked Kunti Devi, "You too seem to have some cause of sorrow in your heart. What is that?" She confessed that she was sorry on account of Karna.

Then Vyasa addressed Gandhari and said, "You will see your sons and other dear ones. Kunti Devi will see Karna, Subhadra will see Abhimanyu and Draupadi will see her son, father and brothers. I had thought of this even earlier. You should not feel sorry at all. All those who died in the Mahabharata war were either gods or demons. Dhritarashtra is a Gandharva king. Pandu comes from the realm of the Maruttas. Vidura and Yudhishthira are emanations of Yama. Duryodhana was Kali and Sakuni was Dwapara. Duhsashana and his brothers were all demons. Bhima is the spirit of Vayu and Arjuna incarnated the spirit of a great sage named Nara. Nakula and Sahadeva came of the god Ashwini and Abhimanyu came of Chandra, the moon-god. Draupadi and Dhrishtadyumna originated from Agni, the fire-god. Shikhandi emerged from a demon. Dronacharya came



from Brihaspati and Aswathama from Shankara.

"Bhisma was one of the Vasus. Now, without any delay, you all should gather on the bank of the Bhagirathi. I will show you the beings you are weeping for and make you happy."

All felt excited at this assurance. They hurried towards the river. Dhritarashtra proceeded there accompanied by the Pandavas and the sages. They waited on the riverbank till the sunset. They entered the river and saluted the departing sun.

Then they gathered before Vyasa. The sage entered the water and called loudly the heroes who had died in the Mahabharata war.

Soon a strange scene was witnessed. All the dead heroes like Bhism and Drona were seen emerging from the river. Virata, Drupada, Upandava, Abhimanyu, Ghatotkacha, Karna, Duryodhana and all others came out in the very dress which they wore while dying. There was no enmity between the two camps any more. Vyasa bestowed on the blind Dhritarashtra the power to see. The old king and Gandhari beheld to their hearts' content their lost sons and grandsons. All were delighted to see their dead relatives reappearing.

The dead and the living mixed and all were happy. The Pandavas talked with Karna, Abhimanyu and Upapandava. The night was spent with great joy. Thereafter the dead ones disappeared in the river just as they had appeared. They returned to the different regions from which they had come.

Vyasa told the wives of the Kauravas, "Those of you who

wish to accompany your husbands to their regions may enter the river." All the wives of the Kauravas, with the permission of Dhritarashtra and Gandhari, entered the river.

Dhritarashtra had no more agony. He returned to his ashram with a peaceful mind. He then reminded the Pandavas that it was time for them to go back to Hastinapura and look into the affairs of the kingdom. Yudhishtira was not willing to leave the place. He had no desire for ruling over his kingdom. Sahadev too was not at all in a mind to leave Kunti Devi. But Kunti herself asked them to go back to Hastinapura. So they were obliged to start. Dhritarashtra gave them a warm farewell.

A little later Narada came to see Yudhishtira. He was received with profound respect. The sage said that he was just coming from the sacred forest on the Ganga. "Did you see our uncle? Is he well? And how are Gandhari, Kunti and Sanjay?" asked Yudhishtira.

Narada answered: "Yudhishtira! After you left them, Dhritarashtra, Gandhari and





Kunti went away to Gangadwara, leaving Kurukshetra. Sanjay and a Brahmin priest accompanied them. At Gangadwara your uncle lived on air alone and did severe askesis for six months. Gandhari used to take nothing but water. Kunti too fasted. Sanjay ate only a blade of grass in a day. The priest used to perform the sacred rites. After some time Dhritarashtra wandered in the forest in a whimsical manner. Gandhari and Kunti followed him. Kunti used to take all care of Gandhari. One day while Dhritarashtra was coming from the

blew and soon the forest caught fire.

When the fire spread near him, Dhritarashtra told Sanjay, 'You should go away to a safer area. I have decided to die in this fire and pass on to heaven. Nothing can change my decision. You must obey this last instruction from me!'

Sanjay entreated him, 'O King, how can I bear your death in the fire? The fire is rapidly spreading around you. Please come out of it!'

'Sanjay! Don't you know that a Yogi is ever ready to die either by wind or water or fire? Now, you must leave me forthwith,' ordered Dhritarashtra.

Sanjay walked with deep love round Dhritarashtra, Kunti and Gandhari and requested them to sit in trance. They sat accordingly. Their bodies were consumed by the flames. Sanjay came out of the forest and met Narada. He narrated everything to Narada and departed for the Himalayas."

This news was received by the Pandavas and all the citizens with profound sorrow. Narada revealed to Yudhishtira that

the fire that burnt the forest had emanated from Dhritarashtra himself. He sacrificed his body in the fire of his own and passed on to heaven.

Yudhishtira went to the river Ganga and performed the necessary rites for the departed souls. On the twelfth day he distributed alms and fed numerous people. It was after eighteen years of the Mahabharata war that Dhritarashtra had died. He had spent the last three years of his life in the forest.

Yudhishtira's reign continued for still eighteen years more. Towards the end of this period he heard the shocking news that all the Yadavas had been destroyed save Krishna and Balaram.

He told his brothers, "I hear that the Yadavas have killed

each other. What should we do now?

This is how the Yadavas had died.

Once the sages Viswamithra, Kanya and Narada visited Dwarka. Seeing them coming, Sarana and other Yadava youths dressed up Samba as a woman and showing him to the sages, asked, "O holy ones, this young lady is pregnant. Her husband desires a son. Can you tell whether it would be a son or a daughter?"

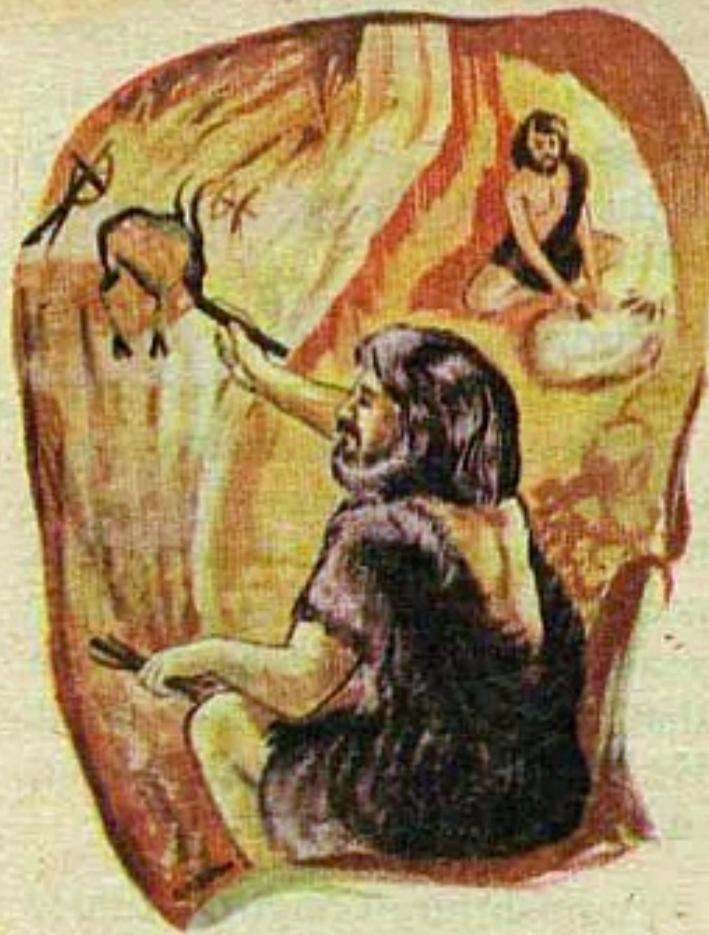
The sages replied with fury, "She would deliver a pounder —which would smash all the arrogant and the irreverent."

The sages met Krishna and reported to him all about it. Krishna at once knew that the words of the sages would not go in vain.



WHEN DID MAN FIRST APPEAR ON EARTH?

We will never know the answer to this question, for even the finest scientists in the world can only guess when Man first appeared on the Earth. In a sense, history was not recorded until Man found a way of writing, perhaps 6,000 years ago ; but objects unearthed must have been made many thousands of years earlier. Among tools found were those by which Man scratched the first picture—in his cave home.



WONDERS WITH COLOURS



A LUNCH FROM THE LANDLORD

There was a landlord who was extremely vain. In his village all the other people were poor peasants. The landlord treated them scornfully. If any of them came near him, he was very angry. "They smell so obnoxious!" he would say and cover his big nose with his colourful silken hanky. Naturally, the villagers hated him equally and kept themselves physically as far as possible from him.

One day, the peasants were talking among themselves while working in the fields. One of them said, "I saw the landlord on the street this morning and immediately ran a furlong away from him!" Another said, "When I saw him coming, I dived into the river!"

But an old peasant said, "Why are you so much afraid of him? You all think that he cannot bear our presence, do you? That is nonsense. I bet, I can go near him, talk to him. Not only that, I can oblige him to entertain me to a good lunch in his very presence!"

"Do not boast like that," his fellow peasants warned him. "You will never get an entry into his compound. His guards would just throw you out!" they laughed and said.

"I am not boasting. I can certainly do what I said," asserted the old peasant.

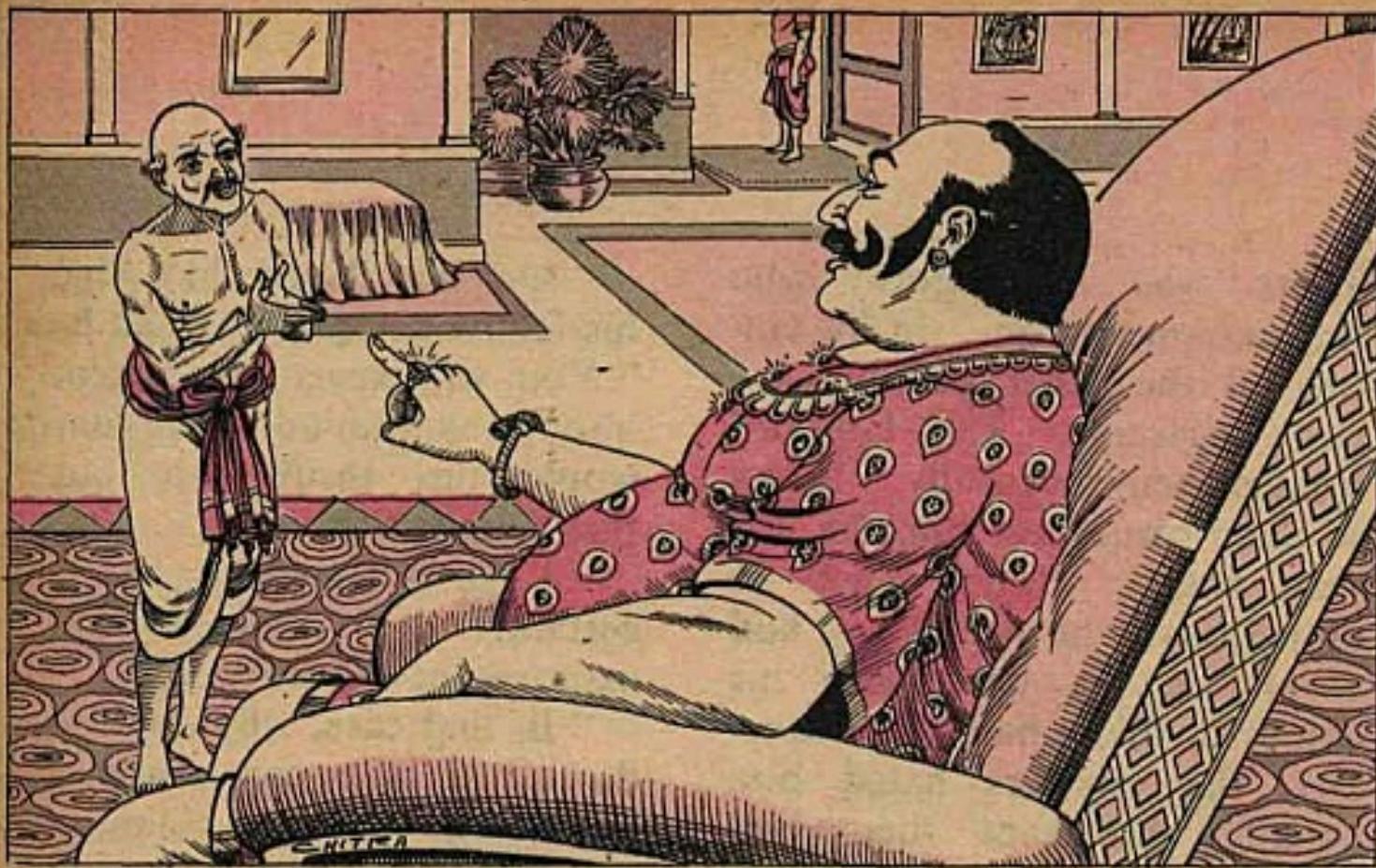
"In that case, why don't you do it? If you can really act according to your claim, we will give you a heap of rice and a pair of bullocks!" the fellow peasants provoked him thus and said further, "But if you fail in your mission, you must do whatever we order you to do. Is that all right?"

"All right," the old peasant accepted the challenge.

At midday he proceeded to the landlord's palace. The guards at the gate frowned on him and stopped him rudely.

But the peasant said calmly, "Allow me to go in. I have a very good news to give to your master."

"Tell us what it is. We will convey it to him," the guards suggested.



"That is not possible. I can confide it only to the landlord," the old man said with a meaningful smile and added, "If you do not allow me now, it might be too late!"

One of the guards went in and reported it to the landlord. The landlord became curious. He thought that the old man had really some great news to give him. He ordered the guard to bring him in.

The peasant was duly ushered in.

"What is the news you have to pass on to me?" asked the eager landlord.

"I can say that only to you,

confidentially!" the peasant said in great earnestness.

The landlord asked the guards and his servants to vacate the room. Then he looked at the peasant with expectation.

"My lord, what would be the price of a potful of gold?" asked the peasant in a whisper.

"But why do you want to know this?" asked the landlord, also in a whisper.

"For a very important reason, my lord. Do tell me, if you know the price," said the peasant.

"But why don't you tell me the reason for such a query?" the landlord asked impatiently.

"My lord! It seems you will not be pleased to answer my humble question. Let me go away then, for, I am awfully hungry. I will fall down dead if I do not hurry to my home and eat something immediately. Am I not brooding over this question since last two days?" asked the peasant.

"No, no, you need not run home for food," said the landlord and calling his servants, instructed them to bring whatever delicious dishes were available right into that very room. His instruction was obeyed. The peasant sat down and cleaned the plates to the last morsel.

The landlord, who was waiting for the peasant to finish eating, questioned him with greater zeal, "Now tell me, good old man, where is the

potful of gold? I advise you to bring it to me. I will reward you well."

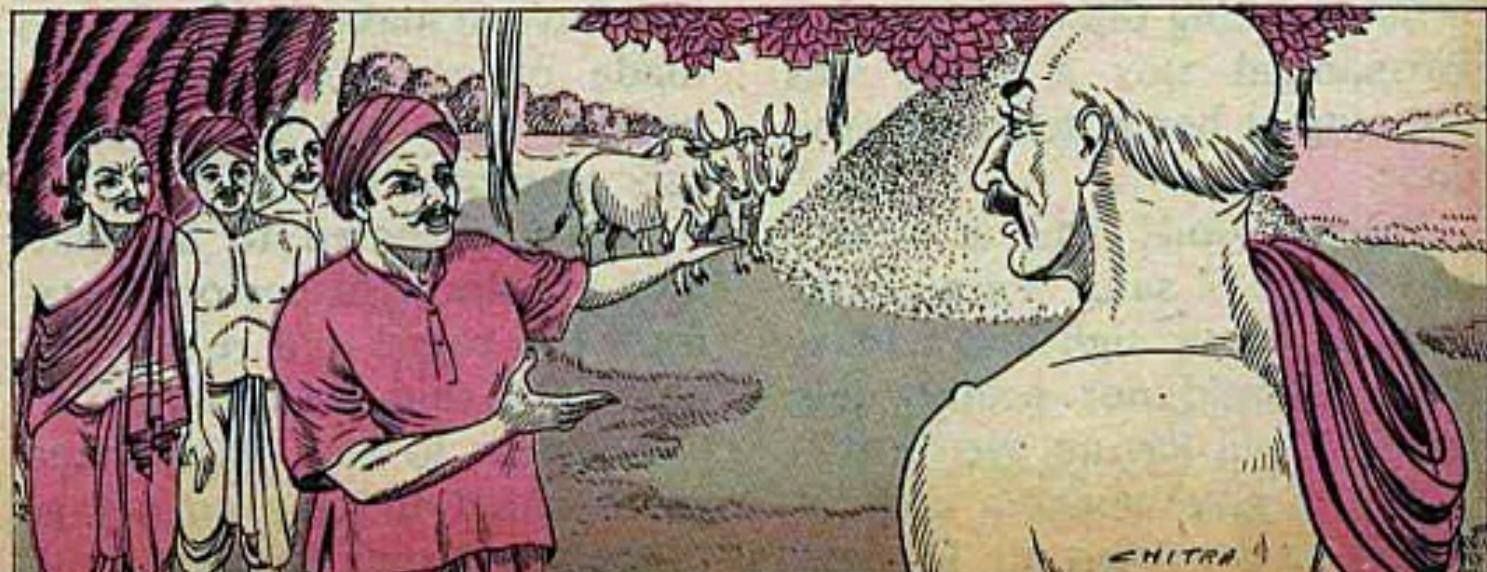
The peasant yawned and said, "Gold? Where is the gold, my lord? All I wanted to know was that whether a potful of gold was equivalent to the value of a heap of rice and a pair of bullocks. I thought nobody but you could answer the question."

"Get out!" shrieked the landlord.

"All right, my lord," said the peasant as he hurried out.

He then narrated everything to his fellow peasants. From a villager who was a servant in the landlord's household, they found out that what the old man claimed was indeed true!

They presented him with a heap of rice and a pair of bullocks as promised.





THE DEVIL'S LIEUTENANT

There was a rich merchant who once built a new mansion for himself. He called the village astrologer, Parmanand by name, to have a look at the house and to advise him about the auspicious moment when he could formally transfer his household to the new mansion.

On reaching the new mansion Parmanand saw a tabby cat jumping at her kitten before the door.

"Good God! This is a very bad omen!" said Parmanand with a heavy sigh and added, "You should not occupy this house. Devil has an eye on it!"

"But I have spent a lakh of rupees to construct it. Do you

mean to say that all would go in vain?" asked the worried merchant.

"Not quite!" said Parmanand rubbing his palm on his bald-pate, "You can use the house if you perform a special rite known as the 'Thunder.—Appeaser Yajna'. As a part of that rite, you have to make a gift of a cat made of gold to some great pundit, say, like myself, who can propitiate the devil."

"I am prepared to do that. You are the right person to perform the yagna and receive the gold cat," said the merchant.

Needless to say, Parmanand just wanted to take advantage of the merchant's ignorance and

superstition. He was very happy that his plan was going to be successful.

A dozen of Brahmin scholars were invited from nearby villages to perform the formal rites the day the merchant changed his residence to the new house.

Among them was Krishna Bhatt, who had a thorough knowledge of all the rites and rituals. Now, Krishna Bhatt was amazed to see that Parmanand was given a gold cat after he had performed some strange rite which he called the 'Thunder-Appeaser Yajna'!

After others departed, Krishna Bhatt walked to Parmanand and smilingly said, "Brother, with all my study of the scriptures I have never read or heard anything like the 'Thunder-Appeaser Yajna'! I have neither read or heard about the provision of a gold cat being gifted to a Brahmin. Will you please enlighten me about this strange occurrence?"

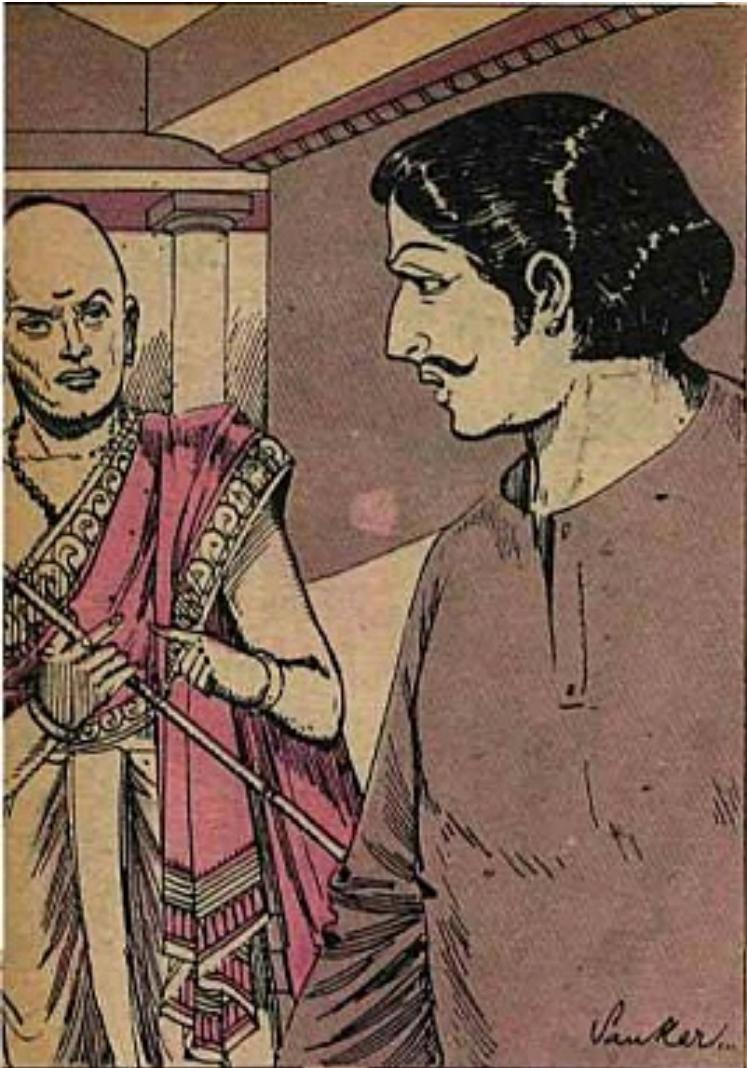
Parmanand realised that Krishna Bhatt cannot be deceived. So, he said in a low tone, "Come to my home at night, I will give you your share of the gold."



"But there are several other scholars who participated in the function. What about their share? Krishna Bhatt demanded to know.

"Please meet me at night. I will give you enough gold to satisfy all of them," said Parmanand.

But in the evening Parmanand went to the merchant and whispered to him, "Look here, I have no doubt propitiated the devil, but the devil has a lieutenant who is a very naughty chap. He is likely to appear before you tonight disguised as any one of the Brahmin scholars whom you entertained this



morning. When he comes, give him a merciless beating."

The merchant agreed to do as advised.

At night Krishna Bhatt went to Parmanand's house. But Parmanand told him rudely, "Get out, you fool. I owe you nothing. You may do whatever you like!"

"I will expose your lies before the merchant!" threatened Krishna Bhatt.

"Go to hell!" yelled Parmanand.

The angry Krishna Bhatt straight went to the merchant's mansion. When he knocked on

ceeded to open it, raising his stick high.

"Why are you raising the stick?" someone of his family asked him.

"Parmanand warned me that the devil's lieutenant would come to harm me, disguised as a scholar. I will give him a good blow!" replied the merchant.

Luckily, Krishna Bhatt could hear this. He fled immediately.

But he was now determined to teach a lesson to Parmanand. He called his servant and gave him certain instructions. The servant went to Parmanand's house and told him, "Sir! the merchant desires to see you urgently."

Parmanand hurried to the merchant's mansion and knocked on his door. The door opened immediately, but before Parmanand could speak, the merchant cried out, "You devil's servant! You have the audacity to take the shape of the venerable scholar Parmanand!"

While speaking this, the merchant brought down his heavy iron-studded stick on Parmanand's head. Parmanand fell down. The merchant shut the



Krishna Bhatt and his servant were hiding in the darkness. They came out and lifted Parmanand up and carried him to his house.

"I believe, good sense will

prevail in you now!" said Krishna Bhatt.

"Yes. Thanks to the merchant's stick!" said Parmanand himself and he shared the gold cat with all the scholars.

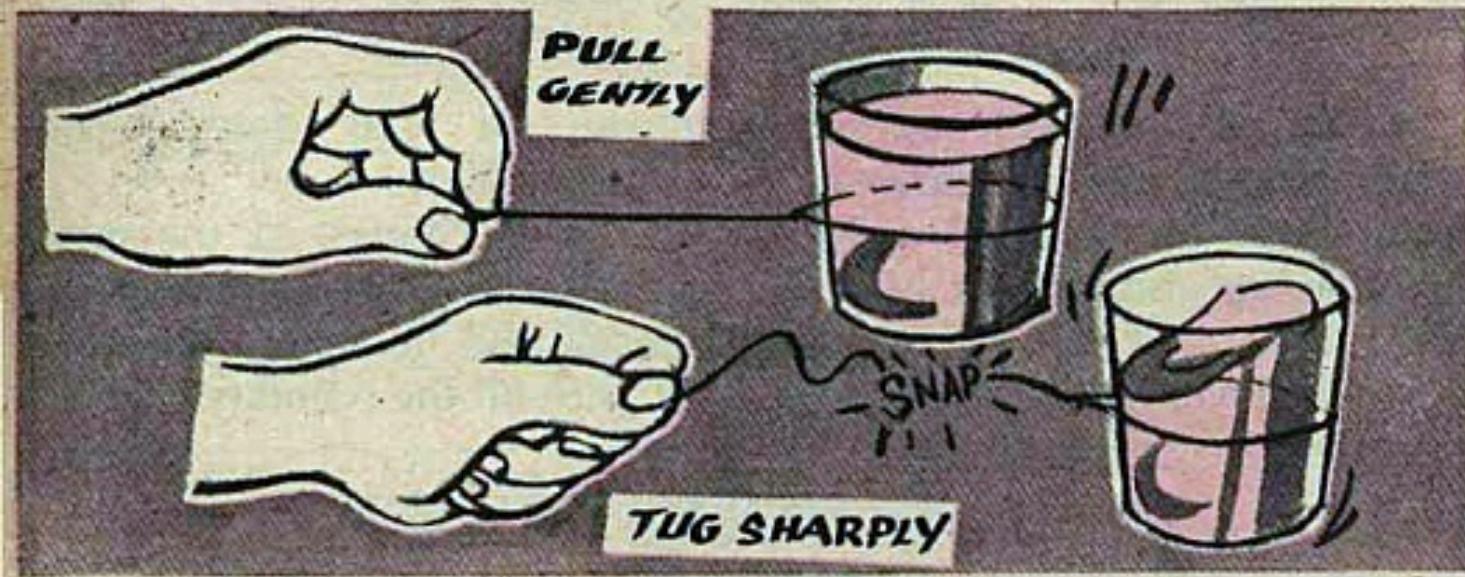
WHAT'S YOUR SCORE? ANSWERS

1. France ; 2. Septuagenarian ; 3. Trireme ; 4. September ;
5. Three-Quarters ; 6. The Arctic, Antarctic, North and South Atlantic, North and South Pacific and Indian Oceans ; 7. Stheno, Euryale and Medusa ; 8. Pride, Envy, Wrath, Lust, Gluttony, Avarice and Sloth ; 9. Cricket ; 10. A Heptad ; 11. Reading, 'riting and rithmatic' ; 12. A Septet ; 13. A three pronged, forklike Spear ; 14. A Heptagon ; 15. Leather Wedding ;
16. Netball ; 17. The Pope ; 18. Rome ; 19. Three Blind Mice ; 20. The American Civil War ; 21. Pawn broking ;
22. Frederik the Great of Prussia and Maria Theresa of Austria ;
23. The Emperors of France (Napoleon), Russia and Austria ;
24. The Colossus of Rhodes, The Temple of Diana at Ephesus, The Hanging Gardens of Babylon, The Tomb of Mausolus, The Pharos of Alexandria (a light house), The Statue of Jupiter, and the Pyramids of Egypt.

FUN WITH SCIENCE

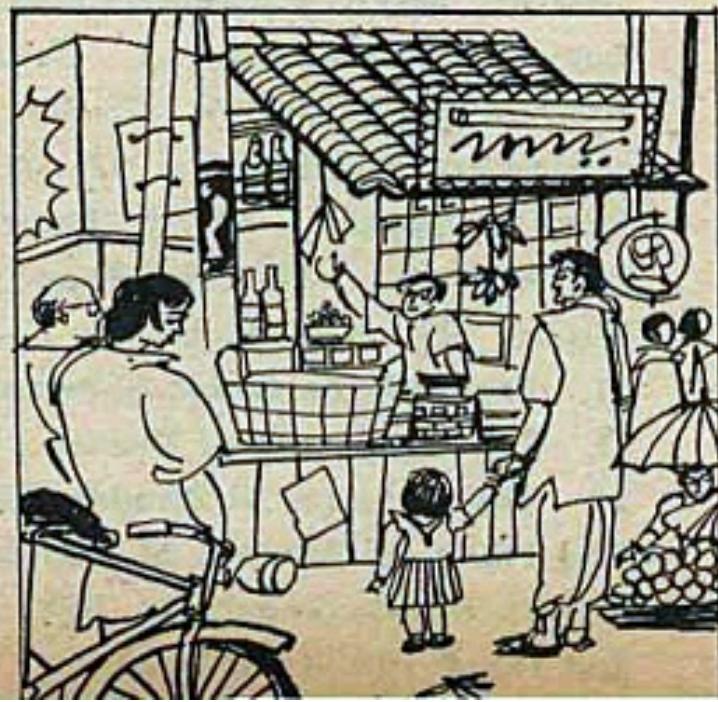
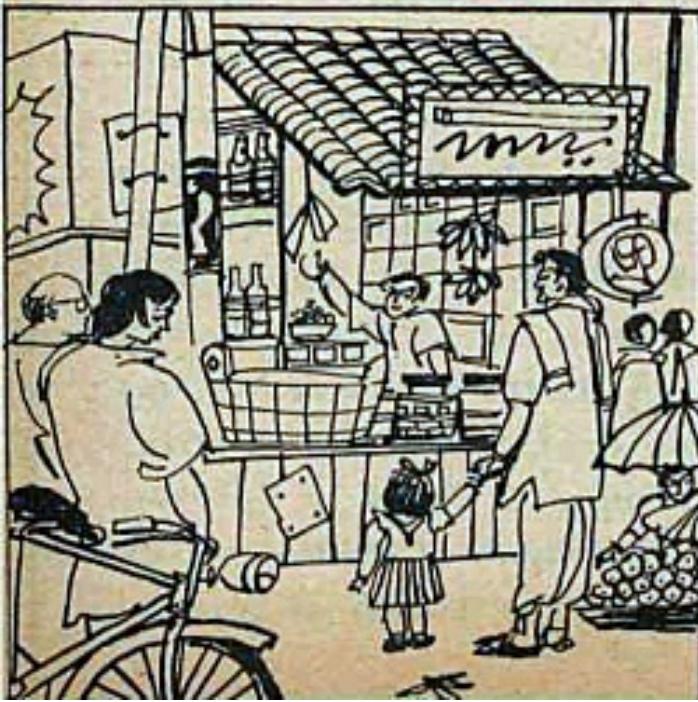
Because of its 'inertia', a stone will remain in the same position until some outside force moves it, such as a boy kicking it. The outside force, however, takes a split-second to overcome inertia. Try this interesting experiment to prove it.

Take a glass filled with water and place it on the table. Now tie a loop in a piece of cotton and drop the loop over the glass. If you pull gently on the cotton, you will be able to slide the glass along. If you tug the cotton suddenly, however, the cotton will snap before the glass moves. This is because in the split-second which it takes to overcome the inertia of the glass, the pressure acting on the cotton is too great for it to stand, and so it breaks.

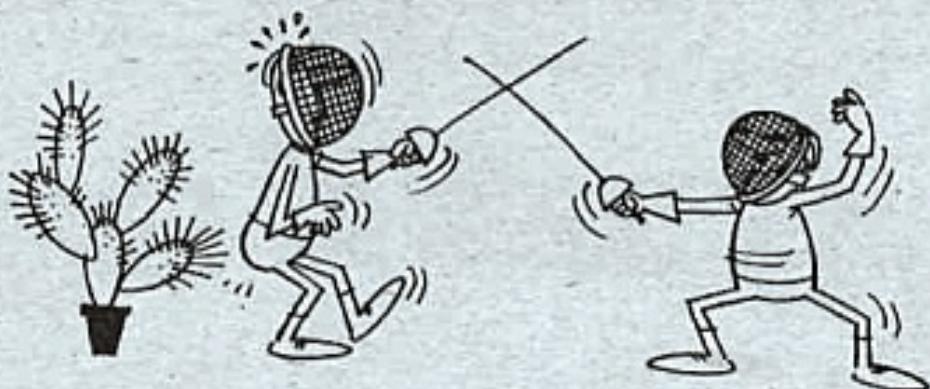


SPOT THE TEN DIFFERENCES

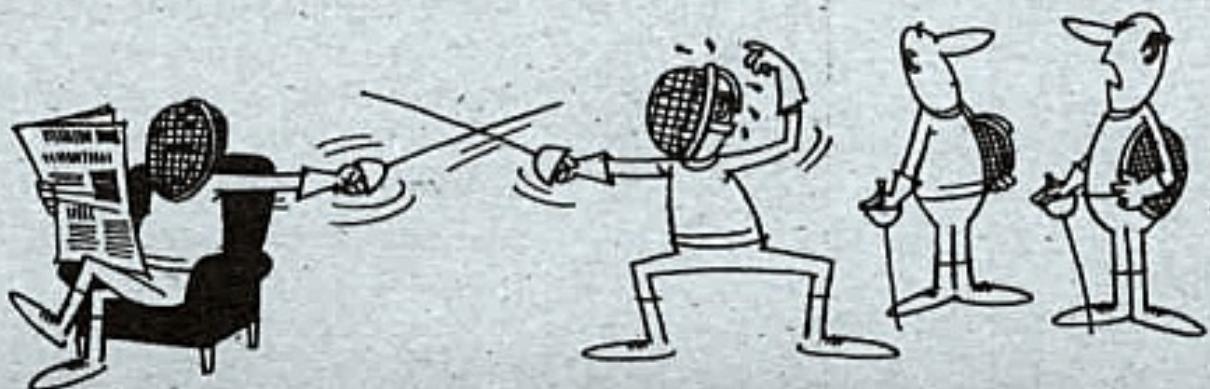
(Sorry, no clue anywhere in the Magazine.)



FUN WITH FIDDY



"Smith is a very bad loser!"



"Over confidence, that's his trouble."

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